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THE  
INVESTIGATION  
OF THE  
LINCOLN WAY

BY  
CHARLES M. THOMPSON  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

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with the best wishes of the writer

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REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OF THE  
ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL LIBRARY  
TO THE FORTY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS ON THE  
INVESTIGATION OF THE  
LINCOLN WAY

*EDMUND J. JAMES*



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URBANA, ILLINOIS, February 20, 1915.

*To the Speaker and Members of the House of Representatives of the Forty-Ninth General Assembly.*

GENTLEMEN:

The Forty-Seventh General Assembly adopted the following as House Joint Resolution no. 25:

“WHEREAS, The People of the State of Illinois, ever mindful of their deep and lasting obligation to Abraham Lincoln, and with abiding love and reverence do strive continually to honor his name and memory; and

“WHEREAS, It is the sense of the People of Illinois that a fitting and permanent memorial to the memory of the great emancipator would be the consecration and dedication of the route that he traveled from the place of his birth in Kentucky, through Indiana, and thence to his tomb at Springfield, to be known forever as the ‘Lincoln Way’; and,

“WHEREAS, At its last session the legislature of Kentucky enacted a law naming the route over which Abraham Lincoln traveled from his home at Hodgeville [Hodgensville] to Indiana, ‘The Lincoln Way,’ and, in the hope that the state of Indiana will join the states of Kentucky and Illinois in establishing and completing this fitting memorial; therefore, be it

“Resolved, by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring therein, That the Board of Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library be and they are hereby requested to make the necessary investigations to determine the exact route traveled by Abraham

Lincoln in his removal from Kentucky to Illinois, and to report to the General Assembly at as early a date as possible, and make such recommendations as they deem advisable to carry out the purposes of this resolution.

“Adopted by the House May 2, 1911.

“Concurred in by the Senate May 9, 1911.”

The Forty-Eighth General Assembly, in section 1, paragraph 52 of “An Act to provide for the ordinary and contingent expenses of the State Government until the expiration of the fiscal quarter after the adjournment of the next regular session of the General Assembly,” appropriated the sum of \$1,000 for the expenses of this work. In accordance with these provisions the board of trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library appointed Dr. Charles M. Thompson to conduct an investigation to determine, so far as practicable, the route traversed by Abraham Lincoln in his journey from Indiana to his new home in Illinois in 1830. Dr. Thompson has completed his investigations and embodied his conclusions in the report which is transmitted herewith.

It will be seen that the long period of time which has elapsed, and the almost entire absence of first-hand documentary evidence make it impossible to indicate with certainty the details of the route actually followed. The principal stages in the journey may, however, be considered as established beyond a reasonable doubt.

Respectfully submitted,

EVARTS B. GREENE

President of the Board of Trustees of the  
Illinois State Historical Library

*To the Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library.*

GENTLEMEN: I herewith submit a report on the "Lincoln Way" investigation which was undertaken at your request three years ago. The evidence gathered in making this investigation has been subjected to as thorough a criticism as has been possible. Information about definitely located points on the "Way" has necessarily come directly or indirectly from members of the Lincoln party. The greater part of the labor connected with the investigation, however, has had to do with the testing of the accuracy of this information.

Without a single notable exception the people whenever called on for assistance have co-operated to make the investigation a success. To all those who have assisted in this work, I desire here to express my gratitude; a few because of their untiring efforts in this connection deserve individual mention. James Wade Emison of Vincennes, Indiana; Abraham Harrison of West Union; William T. Hollenbeck and Harry W. Drake of Marshall; John F. Lafferty and James Nichols of Martinsville; W. O. Bennett and George S. Boulware (deceased) of Charleston; Joseph Warren Thompson of Chicago; James A. Steele of Sullivan; Jacob T. Zimmer of Shelbyville, and Robert W. Ross of Vandalia, have assisted in locating early roads, land entries, settlements, fords, and ferries. Mrs. Harriet Chapman of Charleston, Joseph A. Hall, Abraham Lincoln Hall, and Mrs. J. D. Martin of Janesville, and

D. H. Dowling of Springfield, all of whom belong to what may be termed the Lincoln family, have transmitted to this investigation the information about the "Way" which they had received from their elders. Jesse W. Weik of Greencastle, Indiana, who collaborated with Mr. Herndon in one of the best known biographies of Mr. Lincoln, has kindly furnished from his manuscript collection an account of an interview with the late Colonel Augustus H. Chapman of Charleston. E. S. Clayton of Martinsville, and Byron R. Lewis of Bridgeport, have rendered valuable service in carrying on a campaign of publicity and in gathering data. The librarians and attendants of the University of Illinois library, Harvard University library, Boston public library, Indiana state library, Illinois state library, Illinois State Historical Library, Chicago public library, Chicago Historical Society library, and the Mercantile Library (St. Louis) have facilitated the examination of printed material on early Illinois. I am under special obligations to Professor Clarence W. Alvord, editor of the *Illinois Historical Collections*, for his helpful criticism while preparing the report.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES M. THOMPSON

THE INVESTIGATION OF THE  
LINCOLN WAY

BY  
CHARLES M. THOMPSON  
UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS



## THE INVESTIGATION OF THE LINCOLN WAY

The "Lincoln Way" is the route traveled by the Lincolns in moving from Indiana to Illinois in 1830; and to determine the location of the Illinois section of this route has been the purpose of the "Lincoln Way" investigation. Recently the expressions "Lincoln Highway" and "Lincoln Trail" have been applied to the several ocean to ocean automobile highways, with the result that the similarity in names and expressions has caused confusion and misunderstanding. The method pursued has been twofold: (1) to determine as many points as possible through which the Lincolns passed in moving to Illinois; (2) to gather data on the roads, trails, ferries, fords, rivers, and settlements in the neighborhood of these points.

This journey into Illinois, not unlike thousands of others in the early thirties, was necessarily made along poorly constructed roads and Indian trails. Although the mania for a network of wagon roads across the state was already being felt, it was not until three or four years later that the actual construction of the roads was undertaken. The stages of water in the rivers and the condition of the adjacent lowlands must have influenced the selection of the route taken in going from the Wabash country to Decatur. On the one hand there would have been the desire to keep away from the

lowlands; on the other the possibility of being able to cross the rivers at natural fords situated on or near the established roads or trails. It has been assumed, in the absence of proof to the contrary, that the Lincolns kept as far as possible to used trails and roads, and that they went from point to point by the most direct route. Some investigation has been made of present-day roads, the routes of which approximate that traveled by the Lincolns, but such investigations have been incidental and they are not included in this report.

Close relatives of Mr. Lincoln differ as to the exact number composing the party, which left Gentryville, Spencer county, Indiana, about March 1, 1830. It is certain, however, that there were at least thirteen: Thomas Lincoln, his wife Sarah, his son Abraham and stepson John D. Johnston; Squire Hall, his wife Matilda, and their son John; Dennis Hanks, his wife Elizabeth, and their four children—Harriet (Mrs. Chapman), John, Sarah Jane (Mrs. Dowling), and Nancy. There are also differences of opinion as to the methods of travel and means of transportation. Some have claimed that the party had but one wagon, others two, and still others three; all agree, however, that heavy wagons were used and that they were drawn by oxen, or oxen and horses.

The route taken by the Lincolns in making that part of the journey in which this investigation has been concerned, lay in eastern Illinois, in what were then the counties of Lawrence, Crawford, Clark, Shelby, and Macon. These five counties comprised an area of more than five thousand square miles and contained in 1830 less than fifteen thousand inhabitants. Between the

Wabash country on the east and Decatur and Shelbyville on the west there was not one important town or settlement. Here and there along the trails leading to the settlements on the Wabash river were small groups of partly improved farms, but town life in that section had not begun. Marshall, Martinsville, Casey, Greenup, Charleston, Mattoon, Sullivan, and Lovington were yet to be built. Viewed from any angle, that part of Illinois through which the Lincolns traveled in 1830 was a typical unsettled frontier. After having traveled two weeks and traversed something like two hundred and twenty miles, the party reached their destination in the vicinity of Decatur, Illinois, about March 15, 1830.

Needless to say, in the determination of this "Lincoln Way," the first problem confronting the investigation has been to ascertain at what point the Lincolns crossed from Indiana and entered Illinois. An examination of printed material early in the investigation led to the belief that they passed through Vincennes, Indiana, and crossed the Wabash river into Illinois at or near that city; and subsequent investigation has confirmed that belief. Evidence to the contrary is scant and self-contradictory.

As to the place and manner of crossing the Wabash river, there is a sharp difference of opinion. Mr. James Wade Emison and others believe that the Lincolns traveled northward from Vincennes on the Indiana side of the river, crossing into Illinois at the Russellville ford. This belief is founded on a conversation between Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Emison's grandfather, the late William W. C. Emison. (See appendix A.) In the conversation, which occurred near Mr. Emison's

home north of Vincennes, Mr. Lincoln is reported to have said that the party was then on its way to the ford where Russellville was later built. Mrs. Harriet Chapman of Charleston, Illinois, who was a member of the Lincoln party, has also said that the crossing of the Wabash was not made at Vincennes. (See appendix B.) No documentary evidence has been submitted to prove that the ford mentioned by Mr. Emison was used at the time. There is, however, ample evidence in the archives of Knox county, Indiana, to prove the existence of a well-kept wagon road on the Indiana side of the river leading from Vincennes to John McCarty's ferry on the Wabash, west of Shakertown, Indiana. The exact location of this ferry has not been determined, but from the general description of its location, one is led to believe that it could not have been far from the site of Russellville. Because of the character of the evidence and the integrity of the men presenting it, the conclusion has been reached that the Lincolns went northward from Vincennes on the Indiana side of the river *intending* to cross into Illinois farther up the stream.

Mr. Lincoln once told his kinsman, the late Colonel Augustus H. Chapman of Charleston, Illinois, that the party crossed the Wabash river into Illinois *at* Vincennes and went westward *to* Lawrenceville, Illinois. (See appendix C.) The road between Lawrenceville and Vincennes, the great western mail route, was an old and well-established one. Several ferries were in operation on the Wabash at Vincennes throughout the year 1830, and the crossing of the river at that point would have been comparatively easy.

These two versions of the same event, conflicting as they appear to be, are not irreconcilable. The elder Mr. Emison knew only the *intentions* of the travelers. He has left no record of having *definite information about the crossing* of the river, and there is no evidence to show that the party did not return to Vincennes and cross the river there. Mrs. Chapman has doubts about the matter. Three years ago, she expressed the opinion that the party crossed the river at Vincennes. Later, on learning of Mr. Emison's statement, she was inclined to agree with him, and so expressed herself. (See appendix B.) She has stoutly contended, however, that the crossing of the Wabash was made by ferrying and not, as Mr. James Wade Emison believes, by fording. There is no reason, therefore, why both versions of the crossing may not be correct. It is conceivable that the Lincolns first went northward from Vincennes, intending to cross the river above, but that for some reason they turned back and crossed at Vincennes. Mrs. Chapman's uncertainty about the crossing would indicate that there was some derangement of plans. In the light of Mr. Lincoln's statement to Colonel Chapman, it must be concluded that the Lincolns crossed the Wabash river into Illinois at Vincennes.

After crossing the Wabash at Vincennes, the Lincolns went westward along the great western mail route to Lawrenceville. (See appendix C, D.) At that point they turned northward, going to Palestine in Crawford county. (See appendix B, C, D.) In the *Preliminary report* on the "Lincoln Way," the opinion was expressed that traveling in the spring of the year through the low lands northeast of Lawrenceville would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible.

That opinion has since been proved to be incorrect; but, because it may be held by others, it has seemed advisable to say something about the routes from the Wabash river opposite Vincennes to Palestine.

Between these points any one of three routes might have been traveled. (See appendix Q.) One route was along the river road, which paralleled the Wabash to the vicinity of the site of Russellville. Another led for several miles along the great western mail route toward Lawrenceville, and thence northward through or near the Christian settlement in Allison prairie. From that point it led in a northeasterly direction, converging with the river road at or near the site of Russellville. These two routes were approximately equal in length. The third route was along the great western mail route to Lawrenceville and thence in a northeasterly direction to where it converged with the second road already noticed. In going to Palestine by the way of Lawrenceville the Lincolns were compelled to cross the Embarras river twice and to travel some ten miles farther than they would have traveled on either of the other roads. The crossing of the Embarras river, however, would have been comparatively easy. At the time there were two ferries in operation on that river at Lawrenceville: one between Vincennes and Lawrenceville on the great western mail route; the other on the road leading northeastward from Lawrenceville toward the Christian settlement. The presence of ferries at these points indicates not only the existence of roads, but also their use for travel. The greatest obstacle to the use of the road from Lawrenceville to the Christian settlement in the spring of the year would have been the water in what was called

the Purgatories, a stretch of low land lying on the opposite side of the river from Lawrenceville. In this connection a study of the conditions of travel has been made. An examination of the issues of the *Western Sun* (published at Vincennes) from 1815 to 1845, leads to the conclusion that the stage of water in the Wabash at Vincennes was lower during the first two weeks of March, 1830, than at the corresponding time in any of the other years examined. It was too low in fact for steamboat navigation—an unusual condition for that season of the year. The low stage of the river does not prove that the road across the Purgatories was dry or even above water; it merely indicates that there is a strong probability that such was the case.

Two of the Lincoln party have left accounts of their movements in this vicinity. Mr. Lincoln and Mrs. Dowling state positively that the party passed through Lawrenceville (see appendix C, D), and their statements are supported by a tradition held by the people of that city and vicinity. (See appendix E.) Assuming that the route by the way of Lawrenceville was longer and more liable to inundation than either of the others, it is not improbable that considerations weightier than the loss of the better part of a day's journey caused the travelers to take the longer route. If the story that Mr. Lincoln carried a supply of merchandise to sell to the settlers along the way be accepted as true, it might well be concluded that the detour was made in order to pass through the Lawrenceville settlement. It is also probable that they were forced out of a more direct route by demands for supplies procurable only at Lawrenceville. The conclusion has been reached that the Lincolns went westward from a

point on the Illinois shore of the Wabash opposite Vincennes to Lawrenceville, that they recrossed the Embarras river at Lawrenceville and went in a north-easterly direction through or near the Christian settlement; that they came into the river road at or near the site of Russellville, and that they followed the river road to Palestine.

From Palestine the Lincolns continued northward through Hutsonville and York to Darwin. In the *Preliminary report* the opinion was held that the travelers went in a northwesterly direction from York along an old Indian trail known to have been in use at that time. (See *Preliminary report on the "Lincoln Way,"* 7, 8, and appendix F.) Mr. Lincoln's own statement about the route proves that opinion to have been incorrect. (See appendix C.)

Another point believed to be on the "Lincoln Way" was the Paradise settlement near the headwaters of the Little Wabash river in what is now the western part of Coles county. (See appendix D, G, K.) The post-office that served the settlement was called Paradise. (See appendix H.) It was located on the intersection of the Paris-Shelbyville road and the Little Wabash river, not far from the present city of Mattoon. In locating the general route from the Wabash country to Paradise two distinct problems have arisen. The first has to do with the general direction taken, the second with the crossing of the Embarras river in what was then Clark county.

Mrs. Chapman has expressed the opinion that the Lincolns traveled northwesterly from the Wabash country until the national road was reached; that they followed this road to the site of the village of Greenup,

in what is now Cumberland county, where they crossed the river, and that they went from that point to Paradise. (See appendix B.) Mr. Lincoln told a kinsman, Colonel Chapman, that the party passed through Richwoods, which was in the northern part of Clark county, and about three miles east of the site of Westfield, Illinois. (See appendix C.) The descendants of Squire Hall, and an old neighbor of Thomas Lincoln, believe that the Embarras was crossed at McCann's ford, called Logan's ford in 1830. This ford is situated about a mile north of the southern boundary of Coles county and about the same distance from the Lincoln farm in the same county. (See appendix G, I.)

Mrs. Chapman has stated that she heard her father, Dennis Hanks, "speak of crossing the Embarras river at Greenup, and that the cause of said Hanks speaking of this event repeatedly was, that he afterwards worked on a bridge built at that point." The Halls, who have lived practically all their lives in the immediate vicinity of McCann's ford, state emphatically that they have heard their father, the late John J. Hall, speak of crossing the river at that point. A search has failed to prove or disprove the assertion that Mr. Hanks assisted in building the bridge at Greenup. It is known, however, that a river bridge was built at McCann's ford in the forties; and it is the opinion of the Halls that Mr. Hanks worked on that bridge and not on the one at Greenup. (See appendix G, M.) Mr. Hanks lived in Charleston at the time he is supposed to have done the work mentioned above, and it is not improbable that he spoke of working on a bridge "*down toward Greenup*," which has been interpreted

by Mrs. Chapman to mean "*at* Greenup." Evidence presented by the Halls ought to be given great weight in this matter. They grew up near McCann's ford, and crossed it often with their father, who was intimately associated with Thomas Lincoln and other members of the party. It was but natural for the father to have remarked about the crossing on such occasions. If the party was at Richwoods, which is assumed to be a fact in this investigation, McCann's ford would have been a more-likely crossing place than any ford at the site of Greenup.

An examination of facts about these routes may assist in reaching a determination. So far as is known there was no national road in Illinois in March, 1830. It was not until September and October of that year that contracts for building the Illinois part of the national road were let. Furthermore, but one family lived at the time the contracts were let on the entire ninety miles of the road's route from Vandalia, Illinois, to the Indiana state line west of Terre Haute, Indiana. (See appendix L.) Even though the route of the road had been marked—and there is no evidence at hand to prove that such was the case—it seems improbable that the Lincolns should have traveled several days through an uninhabited country when by making a short detour northward they could have avoided the bottoms of the North Fork river and at the same time could have passed through several small settlements in the northwestern part of what is now Clark county. Moreover, if they had traveled along the route of the national road, their experiences in crossing Hurricane creek as related by one of the Halls could

not have occurred, for this creek flows southward and empties into the Embarras river north of the national road. (See appendix G, O.)

That a road led from McCann's ford westward to the Paradise settlement and eastward toward Darwin, there can be no doubt. (See appendix M.) Soon after the organization of Coles county in 1831, a petition was presented to the county commissioners praying them to have viewed "a county road, commencing on the Clark County line at the head of long point creek on a path now used, thence west to the Embarras River at what is called Logan's Ford near where John McCann now lives thence through Goosenest prairie, near Indian creek, thence the nearest and best road to Shelby County line in a direction to Shelbyville." (See appendix N.) An examination of land entries before 1830 shows a line of settlements among what appears to have been the "path" mentioned in the petition above. Perhaps the best reason why such a road must have existed was the presence of settlers west of McCann's ford. Practically all these settlers had come from or through the Wabash settlements in exactly the same manner as did the Lincolns. Moreover it was necessary for them to keep in touch with Darwin, the county seat. To have used any other ford now known to be on the Embarras would have caused the settlers in going to Darwin to make a detour of at least a day's journey.

Two other points in Clark county appear to be on the "Way." Mr. Lincoln told Colonel Chapman that the party passed through Richwoods. Mr. Robert Francis of Martinsville, Illinois, has presented evidence to show that the Lincolns passed through what is now

the western side of Parker township, Clark county. (See appendix P.) From Richwoods to Paradise it appears that the Lincolns might have gone by one of two ways. They could have traveled northwesterly, crossing the Embarras river at a point near the site of Charleston, or southwesterly to McCann's ford. The two routes were approximately the same length. In going to McCann's ford they could have passed through the point indicated by Mr. Francis without going far from a direct line. Even in the absence of positive proof that the crossing was made at McCann's ford, there is a presumption that the crossing was not made near Charleston. If the Lincolns had crossed the river at the last named point, they would have passed through a settlement at the site of Charleston; and if they had taken this route it seems strange that Mr. Lincoln, in speaking of the "Way" should have failed to mention that fact to Colonel Chapman. He does, however, mention such places as Richwoods and Nelson, the former of which was never anything more than a settlement, while the latter had practically disappeared as a town by 1861, when Mr. Lincoln described the route.

With due consideration for every phase of the testimony presented by Mrs. Chapman, it is the conclusion that the Lincolns traveled in a northwesterly direction from Darwin to Richwoods, that they passed through the western part of Parker township, Clark county, and that they crossed the Embarras river at McCann's ford. Evidence concerning the "Way" from McCann's ford to Decatur is scant but convincing. The Halls believe that the party visited at the home of Ichabod Radley in the Paradise settlement, and

in this belief they are supported by the opinion of others. (See appendix D, G.) Mr. Lincoln told Colonel Chapman that the party went to Dead Man's grove, which was west of the site of Charleston, and northeast of the present city of Mattoon. (See appendix C.) John J. Hall often spoke of the Lincolns passing through the site of Mattoon. (See appendix D, G.)

As has been already pointed out, Paradise was a name given to a postoffice on the headwaters of the Little Wabash river as well as to a settlement in that neighborhood. It has been proved that Ichabod Radley lived in that settlement at the time the Lincolns moved to Illinois. It has been found to be impossible, however, to locate definitely the home of Radley at that time. (See appendix R.) He appears to have been either a renter or a squatter, for it was not until later that he owned land in the county. Assuming that the Lincolns were in the immediate vicinity of Paradise postoffice, they would have gone in a northeasterly direction to Dead Man's grove. From the last named place they would have traveled in a northwesterly direction to the site of Nelson, called Nelsonville by Mr. Lincoln, where they crossed the river. None of the party has left any record of the route from Nelson to Decatur. It has been determined, however, that a road connected these points, and that the Lincolns entered Decatur from the south. (See appendix S, T.) From Decatur they went to a farm in Macon county, which has since come to be known as the "Lincoln Farm."

From the evidence at hand it is believed that the following points are on the "Lincoln Way" in Illinois: (1) a point on the Illinois bank of the Wabash river

opposite Vincennes, Indiana; (2) Lawrenceville; (3) Christian settlement; (4) Russellville; (5) Palestine; (6) Hutsonville; (7) York; (8) Darwin; (9) Richwoods; (10) McCann's ford; (11) Paradise; (12) Mattoon; (13) Dead Man's grove; (14) Nelson; (15) Decatur; (16) "Lincoln Farm," Macon county.

Several statements about the "Way" remain to be noticed. In the *Charleston [Illinois] Daily News* of September 12, 1912, the editor, the late James K. Rardin, stated that the Lincolns went from Lawrenceville to Vandalia and thence to Paradise in search of a family named Radley. (See appendix U.) A critical analysis of Mr. Rardin's statements leads to the conclusion that he has confused the journey of the Lincolns into Illinois with their subsequent journey from Macon county to Coles county. Mr. Rardin says that the Lincolns came to Illinois in 1831. It is definitely known that they came in 1830. He says further that Radley was a candidate for office in Coles county at that time. The act authorizing the erection of Coles county was passed by the legislature in December, 1830, nine months after the Lincolns entered Illinois, and the county was not organized until 1831. The first county election was held February 5, 1831. (See election returns for 1831, Coles county court house; appendix V.) The Lincolns could not have remained at the Radleys "between spring and fall" for it is agreed by Mr. Lincoln's biographers that Lincoln assisted the family in planting a crop in Macon county in the spring of 1830. The members of the party that have left any record whatever of the journey agree that the route to Decatur was more direct than it would have been had they gone through Vandalia. In this

connection, Mr. Rardin stated also that the Lincolns crossed the Wabash at Vincennes and passed through Lawrenceville. In a subsequent issue of the same paper, November 29, 1912, he described the journey as follows: "Again, and again, the Lincolns did not go to Vincennes, but to Mt. Carmel. They never crossed the Embarras at all, but having meager horse sense they never crossed the Little Wabash till they got near the source about Ewington." (See appendix U.) Just what caused such a radical change of opinion within a few weeks has not been determined.

Mr. G. M. McConnel, son of the late Murray McConnel of Jacksonville, Illinois, holds the opinion that the Lincolns passed through Vandalia when they moved to Illinois in 1830. This opinion is based on his father's account of seeing Mr. Lincoln pilot the party across the Kaskaskia at Vandalia. The elder Mr. McConnel may have seen Mr. Lincoln under similar circumstances at a later date; it seems certain, however, that he did not see him as the younger Mr. McConnel remembers it. In the light of Mr. Lincoln's own statement about the route taken by his family, therefore, it must be concluded that Vandalia is not on the "Way." (See appendix W.)

During the Lincoln-Douglas debate at Charleston in 1858, a banner stretched across the street bore the information that the Lincolns passed through that city thirty years before. It is believed that the inscription on the banner was merely intended by his admirers to mean that the Lincolns were in the vicinity. This belief is based on Mr. Lincoln's failure to mention such fact to Colonel Chapman, on Mrs. Chapman's denial that

the Lincolns passed through the site of Charleston, on the evidence of the Halls who say that the Embarras river was crossed at McCann's ford, and on the absence of any tradition in and about Charleston that would support the contention that Charleston is on the "Way."

Here and there in the appendix are to be found statements about the "Way" that run counter to well-established facts. They are obviously incorrect and no notice has been taken of them in the report. In several of the articles and affidavits in the appendix there appear incorrect historical statements. They do not, however, affect the results of the investigation, and for that reason they have been allowed to stand without comment.

#### SOURCE MATERIAL

In making this investigation the following sources of information have been used:

*First*—Printed accounts of Mr. Lincoln's life. Practically every important book written on Mr. Lincoln's life has been examined. In addition several well known Lincoln biographers have been consulted, notably Jesse W. Weik of Greencastle, Indiana; Ida M. Tarbell of New York, and J. McCan Davis of Springfield, Illinois.

*Second*—(a) Maps, (b) gazetteers, (c) road laws of the state, (d) United States documents. Maps and gazetteers have been of little value in this investigation. The former show only the well-established routes, while the latter deal almost exclusively with conditions of trade and civilization. Almost all the gazetteers of the period begin their accounts after the year

1830. The road laws have also proved unsatisfactory; they indicate only the authority to build certain roads, but the repetition of many of these authorizations in subsequent laws leads to the conclusion that there is little connection between the authorization of any highway and its construction. In several instances, the reports of viewers of roads authorized by state law have been found in county archives and used to good advantage; otherwise little confidence has been placed in the road-making activities of the state. From United States documents important data on the Cumberland road and on mail routes have been gathered.

*Third*—(a) County commissioners' court records, (b) state archives (Illinois). The records of the county commissioners' courts of Coles and Shelby counties are unusually complete. The former begin in the year 1831, the latter in 1827. In Knox county, Indiana (Vincennes), the county archives date from 1814. The archives of Lawrence, Crawford, Clark, Edgar, Cumberland, Moultrie, and Macon counties, Illinois, have been of little value in this investigation. Practically all the early records of these counties have been lost. As the report will show, little evidence of a positive character has been gathered from these archives. The location of public highways, for instance, is usually indicated by such expressions as "from John Smith's cabin to a stake in the prairie." Equally disappointing have been the state archives. Altogether something like thirty thousand different manuscripts have been examined, and in order to avoid errors each manuscript has been examined twice.

*Fourth*—(a) Surveyors' records, (b) stage-routing books and sheets, (c) mail contracts. Little evidence has been gathered from these sources. Surveyors' records give scant attention to roads, trails, and fords, while stage-routing books and sheets, and mail contracts indicate approximate distances only.

*Fifth*—Contemporary newspapers. The papers examined for this period are the *Western Sun*, Vincennes, Indiana, the *Illinois Intelligencer*, Vandalia, Illinois, and the *Missouri Republican*, St. Louis, Missouri. It was hoped that from these sources something might be learned of the trend of immigration, of the location of roads and settlements, and of the stages of water in the rivers. From the first named paper only has any information bearing on this investigation been secured. Altogether some five hundred issues of these papers have been examined.

*Sixth*—(a) Interviews with old settlers, (b) examination of the remains of old roads and trails. During the three years in which the investigation has been carried on visits have been made along what appeared to be the "Way." It was not to be expected that the experiences of any great number of the people living would reach back to 1830. It was expected, however, and the expectation was realized, that the pioneers could assist in locating early trails, roads, and fords. Without their assistance the labors of the investigation would have been more arduous and prolonged. The examination of the remains of roads and trails has been the means in many cases of verifying both documentary and oral evidence.

*Seventh*—Land entries and land conveyances. In those sections in which there have been doubts as to the

approximate location of roads between known points on the "Way," an examination of land entries has been made. It was not expected that the areas entered and the areas actually settled would coincide. It was expected, however, that the entries would indicate roughly the location of settlements; and without a single exception such has been found to be the case.

*Eighth*—County histories. The history of every county that seemed likely to be concerned in the investigation has been examined. This source has proved valuable in several cases, notably in connection with land entries. The history of Moultrie county, for example, confirms the opinions that the early land entries near Nelson were made by men who had preceded the Lincolns from the Wabash country.

*Ninth*—Newspapers issued between 1854 and 1861. It had been hoped that an examination of the leading Illinois newspapers issued after 1854 would reveal something about Mr. Lincoln's entry into Illinois. In this phase of the investigation ten thousand issues of ten different papers have been examined. With one notable exception, the examination has resulted in failure.

*Tenth*—Statements of members of the Lincoln party, or of their descendants. Evidence coming either directly or indirectly from those who composed the Lincoln party deserves special attention in this investigation, for it is obvious that from no other source could it possibly be derived. Care has been taken, however, to test its accuracy; and whenever it required impossible conditions to make it plausible, or ran counter to better known facts, it has been rejected and the reasons for its rejection given in the report. At least three members of the party, Mr. Lincoln,

Mrs. Harriet Chapman of Charleston, and the late Mrs. Sarah Jane Dowling, have made detailed statements about the "Way." Those of Mr. Lincoln and Mrs. Dowling have been handed down by others, while that of Mrs. Chapman, which is based in part on experience and in part on information gained from her elders, was made for the first time to those in charge of the "Lincoln Way" investigation. Mr. Lincoln's account was given to Colonel Chapman thirty years after the events described and thirty-five years later it was handed on, apparently from memory, to Mr. Weik, who made a written record of it. The circumstances under which this statement was made, however, and the manner of its transmission to this investigation stamp it with a considerable degree of authenticity, for neither Lincoln nor Colonel Chapman, to whom he related the incidents of his entry into Illinois, nor Mr. Weik, who considered it of too little importance to make public until the present time, appeared to have the slightest idea of its historical value. John J. Hall, another member of the party, has handed down his information about the "Way" through his children, but as far as is known no written record was made of it prior to the beginning of this investigation. Although a mere lad at the time the Lincolns came to Illinois, he grew to manhood in the associations of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Lincoln and his father, Squire Hall. Both families lived for years in Coles county near the route traveled in 1830, and it is to be expected that they often spoke of their journey through that part of the country. Young Hall in time became familiar with the story, and in after life often related it to his children and to the neighbors. It seemed to be of little

importance to those who heard it, so much so that they can recall only what was said about the journey through their own neighborhood. The statements by the Halls and the Dowlings about the "Way" were made before the "Lincoln Way" investigation had been proposed. Mrs. Dowling gave her account of the journey to her son, while the Halls are positively known to have believed several years ago that the Lincolns crossed the Embarras river at McCann's ford, and passed through the Paradise settlements.

*Eleventh*—Tradition. Unreliable as tradition may be in historical investigation, it has been used in this investigation with gratifying results. Three years ago the newspapers of the state gave publicity to the "Lincoln Way" investigation. Through their columns the people were asked to submit any information on the subject they might have. During the intervening period an agitation for evidence has been carried on through the newspapers, and by private correspondence and by lectures on the subject in several of the principal cities of the state. In the fall of 1914, a second general request for information was made through the columns of all the papers of the state and of the metropolitan papers outside the state. As a result of this publicity it is believed that people in all sections of the country have had the "Lincoln Way" project called to their attention. Instead of the babel that was expected to result from this method of procedure, scarcely a tradition has arisen that would cause the "Way" to deviate materially from what appears to be its route, which fact may be verified by an examination of the appendix of this report. The

absence of conflicting tradition therefore appears not only to stamp the authenticity of the tradition held along the way, but also to indicate the reluctance of people generally to manufacture tradition for selfish purposes.

## APPENDIX A

## AFFIDAVIT OF JAMES WADE EMISON

STATE OF INDIANA, }  
KNOX COUNTY } SS.

James Wade Emison being duly sworn upon his oath says that he was born on the 7th day of February, 1859, on a farm near the town of Bruceville, Knox county, Indiana, which said farm was settled by Richard Posey of South Carolina somewhere about the year 1800.

Affiant further says that his grandfather, William W. C. Emison, was born at Georgetown, Kentucky, in 1804. That in 1805, the said William W. C. Emison's parents moved from Georgetown, Kentucky, to a point on Mariah creek, in Knox county, Indiana, on the Bruceville and Russellville highway. That the said William W. C. Emison upon arriving at the age of manhood intermarried with Elizabeth Posey, the daughter of said Richard Posey, and thereafter made his home upon said Posey farm, said farm in the course of years coming into his possession and thereafter into the possession and ownership of the son of said William W. C. Emison, to wit, John W. Emison, who was the father of this affiant.

Affiant further says that the Vincennes and Bruceville highway passed along the western edge of said farm, and has been located practically upon its present route for more than one hundred years last past.

Affiant further says that his said grandfather many times called his attention to the point upon said highway where he had first seen Abraham Lincoln. That said point so designated by him was within a short distance of the Posey and Emison homestead, and at a point which is now immediately in front of the present Emison homestead.

Affiant further says that his said grandfather stated that Abraham Lincoln and his father, together with his father's family,

and one Mr. Hanks were moving in wagons, drawn by ox teams, and that this occurred in the year of 1830. That Abraham Lincoln at that time and place stated to him that they had come from southern Indiana, from the locality now known as Spencer county, and that they were moving to the Sangamon country, in the state of Illinois.

Affiant further says that his said grandfather and father talked of these things many times in the presence of this affiant, and further related many times how it was that said Abraham Lincoln had returned to the town of Bruceville in the year 1844, and made a political speech at that time.

Affiant further says that both his said father and grandfather were Fremont Republicans, and were ardent admirers and supporters of Abraham Lincoln, and that it was on account of their great admiration for and devotion to Abraham Lincoln that they often talked of matters herein set forth.

Affiant further says that the Emison family at the time herein spoken of were owners of the stage line, both freight and passenger, from Evansville in the state of Indiana, to Terre Haute in the state of Indiana. That said stage line north of Vincennes and for a distance of some five or six miles was through heavy sand, and that Mr. Lincoln explained to his said grandfather that they had come around by way of Bruceville, which was slightly out of their way, in order that they might avoid driving through said stretch of heavy sand.

Affiant further says that his said grandfather in relating the story of his meeting with Lincoln informed him that Mr. Lincoln said that when they reached the town of Bruceville, which was a short distance away, they proposed to turn west on the Bruceville and Russellville highway, and cross the Wabash river from the state of Indiana, to the state of Illinois, at the Russellville ford.

Affiant further says that his said father and grandfather in after years became warm personal friends of the said Abraham Lincoln, and that on account of their said relations with him, and on account of the disposition of his said grandfather at all times to be exact and truthful in all his statements, he has no question but that his said grandfather's story of his first meeting with

Abraham Lincoln, and the conversations had between them are in all things true.

JAMES WADE EMISON

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 2d day of November, 1912.

WILLIAM S. HOOVER  
Notary Public

AFFIDAVIT OF W. O. ROACH

STATE OF INDIANA, }  
KNOX COUNTY } ss.

William O. Roach, being duly sworn upon his oath, says that he is sixty-three years of age past. That during his childhood, through his youth, and up to the period of manhood he lived in the family of John W. Emison, who was the son of William W. C. Emison, and the father of James Wade Emison, who is at this time a practicing lawyer in the city of Vincennes, Knox county, Indiana. That he knew William W. C. Emison well. That he often heard him speak of the first time he had ever seen Abraham Lincoln. That he pointed out a spot on the Vincennes and Bruceville highway where he had seen him. That he said it was in the year of 1830. That the Lincoln family were moving from Spencer county, Indiana, to the Sangamon country, in the state of Illinois. That they were driving ox teams. That they told him they had diverged from the old stage road, and come around by Bruceville in order to avoid the heavy sand in the stage road. That after they arrived at the town of Bruceville, which was near by, and which was an old settlement, having been founded before the year 1800, they proposed to turn west on the Bruceville and Russellville road, and cross the Wabash river from the state of Indiana to the state of Illinois at the ford located near the town of Russellville.

Affiant further says that immediately after the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, he heard the said William W. C. Emison and his son, John W. Emison, and his brother-in-law, Dr. John Posey, talking about the Lincoln pilgrimage from Indiana to Illinois.

That upon this occasion the said William W. C. Emison spoke of the place where he had first seen Abraham Lincoln and repeated substantially the story hereinbefore set forth.

Affiant further says that the said Emisons were warm friends and great admirers of the said Lincoln, and his life and character were with them a fruitful source of conversation.

Affiant further says that some time between the years 1872 and 1880, he heard Joseph Van Meter, who was at that time a very old man, and who lived near the Emison mill located on the Bruceville and Russellville highway, say that the Lincolns in traveling west in the year 1830 had camped over night near said mill. That he saw them at that time and talked to them as to where they came from, and where they were going.

W. O. ROACH

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 5th day of November, 1912.

W. C. WITTENMYER  
Notary Public

#### AFFIDAVIT OF W. A. TAYLOR

STATE OF INDIANA, }  
KNOX COUNTY } ss.

William A. Taylor being duly sworn upon his oath says that he is fifty-six years of age past. That in the year 1830, his mother was a child six years of age, and lived in the town of Bruceville, Knox county, Indiana.

That he had often heard her say that the Lincoln family in moving from the state of Indiana to the Sangamon country in Illinois, came from Vincennes, and passed through Bruceville, crossing the Wabash river into Illinois at Russellville ford.

Affiant further says that his mother spoke of these things often, and that the Lincolns and his mother's family had been former friends; further stating that at the time said family passed through Bruceville, she saw them and conversed with them.

Affiant further says that his stepfather, Dr. McGowen, often related to him the fact that when Mr. Lincoln and his family

removed from Indiana to Illinois, that the family came into Knox county by crossing at the Apraw ford on White river. That the Lincolns and the McGowens had been friends and acquaintances and neighbors in earlier years in the state of Kentucky. That the McGowens lived at said Apraw ford, and that the Lincolns stopped over night with the McGowens at said Apraw ford. That thereafter they journeyed to Vincennes, and afterwards resumed their journey leaving the city of Vincennes by the Bruceville road, passing through Bruceville, and then turning in a westerly direction on the Bruceville and Russellville road, and crossing the Wabash river at Russellville ford.

Affiant further says that his said mother and his said step-father spoke often of said journey, and spoke of the fact that the family were moving with ox wagons.

W. A. TAYLOR

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 7th day of November, 1912.

WILLIAM S. HOOVER  
Notary Public

AFFIDAVIT OF WILLIAM J. TROUT

STATE OF INDIANA, }  
KNOX COUNTY } ss.

William J. Trout being duly sworn upon his oath says that he is sixty-eight years of age past. That he is the eldest son of the Daniel J. Trout hereinafter mentioned in his relations with William W. C. Emison.

Affiant further says that in the early times the site of the town of Bruceville was the meeting point of several important Indian tribes. That this fact no doubt determined the location of said town.

Affiant further says that one Indian trail ran in a northeasterly course from Vincennes, passing through Bruceville, and ending at the west end of Lake Erie. That another Indian trail extended directly north to the south end of Lake Michigan. That another

Indian trail, and the most important of all of said trails, ran east passing out of the county of Knox at Apraw on White river, and west passing out of said county opposite Russellville, Illinois.

Affiant further says that this trail extended to Cincinnati, Ohio, and all points lying east, and was a trail connecting Cincinnati and Palestine, Illinois. That said trail was an ideal natural highway, and avoided unfordable streams, dense forests, and wet and marshy lowlands. That said trail was much used, first by the Indians, afterwards by white traders, hunters, and trappers in going and returning on their trips, and thereafter by movers going west.

Affiant further says that if there ever was a trail such as the foregoing, leading south from any point in Knox county, and crossing the main stream of White river, he never heard of it, and further that he does not believe there ever was such a trail, or could have been one. The deep streams, the wide bottoms, the dense forests, and drowned lowlands of this region made it impossible.

Affiant further says that the Lincoln family in their removal from Spencer county, Indiana, to the Sangamon country in Illinois, would have been forced by the natural lay of the country to have traveled along a route lying east of the west fork of the White river, and that the natural and only practicable course of travel from their starting point was to have traveled through Pike county and Daviess county to a point on the west fork of the White river, known as Apraw ford. That said route was not only well marked and much traveled, but was located upon high ground, and across the most easily fordable streams. That from said point at Apraw, said highway, which had theretofore been an Indian trail, passed in a westerly direction through Bruceville, and thereafter passed the Emison mill, located on Mariah creek, and which was built in 1807, and thence on in a westerly direction to the ford crossing the Wabash river at Russellville, and thence on to Palestine.

Affiant further says that said route was the only practicable one which the Lincolns could have taken in their journey from Indiana to Illinois.

Affiant further says that he had alway been informed and believed that after crossing White river at said Apraw ford, the Lincoln family then journeyed over a well marked out highway to

Vincennes, and that said highway from said ford at Apraw, to Vincennes was upon high land, and was an excellent natural highway.

Affiant further says that they visited Vincennes, which was the most noted point in all the western country, and a place at which was located a government land office and one of the very few printing presses then in existence in the West.

Affiant further says that naturally upon leaving Vincennes, said Lincoln family would have resumed their journey to the Sangamon country by going to Bruceville, as the nearest practicable way to get into the great line of east and west travel hereinbefore spoken of; further that the line of the Lincoln pilgrimage must of natural necessity have been from Apraw to Vincennes, thence to Bruceville, thence to Russellville, Illinois.

Affiant further says that the Lincolns could not have crossed into Illinois at Vincennes, and thence up to Russellville for the reason that the country north of Vincennes and west of the Wabash river was full of impassable swamps, and contained one deep river, towit, the Embarras.

Affiant further says that his father started in about the year 1837 to learn the tanner's trade of William W. C. Emison, who resided near Bruceville, and lived all or most of the time in said Emison family until his own marriage in 1843.

Affiant further says that his said father remained working for the said William W. C. Emison in his tanyard until the year 1845, at which time he moved to Edwardsport, on the west fork of White river, in Knox county, buying and operating a tanyard of his own.

Affiant further says that his said father lived in said Knox county until his death in 1874.

Affiant further says that he heard his father at different times make mention of Lincoln's journey, and that he feels assured that the story he related was learned from said William W. C. Emison, the same in all things agreeing with the story related by James Wade Emison, who is the grandson of William W. C. Emison.

WILLIAM J. TROUT

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 4th day of November, 1912.

R. L. McClure

Notary Public

NOTES FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT RECORDS,  
KNOX COUNTY, INDIANA

Three ferries licensed by the proper official of Knox county for 1830, to carry passengers, wagons, etc., across the Wabash river at Vincennes. Road overseers appointed for road leading from Vincennes to John McCarty's ferry on Wabash river, west of Shakertown. Ferry license granted to John McCarty for the year 1830. The road to the ferry was in existence as nearly as 1814 and perhaps earlier.

## APPENDIX B

## AFFIDAVIT OF HARRIET CHAPMAN

STATE OF ILLINOIS, }  
COLES COUNTY } ss.

CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS

Harriet Chapman being first duly sworn, on oath, deposes and says that she is now and has been for more than seventy-five (75) years last past a resident of Charleston, Coles county, Illinois, and that she is now past eighty-six (86) years of age.

Affiant further states that she was a member of the Lincoln party that came from Spencer county, Indiana, to Decatur, Illinois, in the year 1830.

Affiant further states that the party had three covered wagons, two drawn by oxen, and one by horses, and two saddle horses; also that the party consisted of affiant, her father and mother, Dennis F. Hanks and Elizabeth Hanks; her brother, John Hanks, and her sisters, Sarah Jane and Nancy Hanks; Squire Hall and wife, Matilda Hall, and one child named John Hall; Thomas Lincoln and his wife, Sarah Lincoln, and child, Abraham Lincoln, and John Johnson.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Johnson signed his name "Johnston". There are accounts showing that the party had but one ox team; in speaking of Greenup, the site of Greenup is intended; by an oversight there was omitted from this affidavit the following: "The affiant further states that her knowledge of events as sworn to in this affidavit is based upon remembrances and upon hearing her parents talk after she became a young lady."

Affiant further states that she is related to Abraham Lincoln in this way: "That her father was a second cousin to Abraham Lincoln, and that affiant was by marriage a granddaughter of Thomas Lincoln, said Thomas Lincoln's wife Sarah, being a grandmother of affiant."

Affiant further states that the party was at Vincennes, Indiana, and that the party in leaving Vincennes went by land, camped the first night out near a grist mill; that the party crossed the Wabash river the next day (the second day after leaving Vincennes, Indiana).

Affiant further states that the party passed through Palestine, Illinois; that she remembers said town from the fact that it had a Bible name.

Affiant further states that the party finally reached the national road, and crossed the Embarras river at Greenup, Illinois; passed through Paradise, located in what is now the southwestern corner of Coles county, Illinois.

Affiant states that she has often heard her father, Dennis Hanks, speak of crossing the Embarras river at Greenup, Illinois, and that the cause of said Hanks speaking of this event repeatedly was that he afterwards worked on the bridge built at that point.

Affiant further states that the party did not follow the national road far west of Greenup, that it did not go to Vandalia, Illinois, and that the trip was made directly to Decatur.

Affiant further states that she is in possession of a photograph of Abraham Lincoln; that said photograph was sent to her by Mr. Lincoln accompanied by a letter, in which he stated "that I am sending you the photograph that I promised you." The letter further states that "this is the first photograph that I have ever had taken."

HARRIET CHAPMAN

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 2d day of November,  
A. D. 1912.

W. O. BENNETT  
Notary Public

## APPENDIX C

## EXTRACT FROM LETTER OF JESSE W. WEIK

February 26, 1913

MR. C. M. THOMPSON,  
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have just finished a careful examination of my Lincoln papers in the hope that I might be able to find something of material value in connection with the matter of the route traveled by the Lincolns in their journey from this state to Illinois in 1830. Away back in the early eighties I often met and talked with Dennis Hanks, as also did Mr. Herndon, but I do not recall that the question of the route of travel ever came up in our talks.

\* \* \* \* \*

Hastily but truly,  
JESSE W. WEIK

## EXTRACT FROM LETTER OF JESSE W. WEIK

November 22, 1913

MR. C. M. THOMPSON,  
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS.

MY DEAR SIR:

I rejoice to tell you that I have just found what I have for so, these many months been hunting and that is the original manuscript of an interview with the late Colonel Chapman of Charleston, Illinois, giving the route the Lincoln family took in making their way to Illinois in 1830. The information was imparted by Mr. Lincoln to Chapman during a ride from Charleston to the site of his father's grave in February, 1860 [January, 1861].

Hastily,  
JESSE W. WEIK

## LETTER OF JESSE W. WEIK WITH INCLOSURES

November 28, 1913

MR. C. M. THOMPSON,  
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS.

MY DEAR SIR:

I inclose herewith a copy of my interview with Colonel Chapman and his wife in January, 1896. Please read it and tell me what you think of it. I add also a copy of a letter written by Colonel Chapman to Mr. Herndon in October, 1865. I inclose besides a rough draft of a map of Coles county on which a friend in Charleston has indicated the site of the Dead Man's grove mentioned in Chapman's interview. I have written to a man in Clark county to indicate on a map where the settlement known as Richwoods stood; also to a party in Moultrie county to fix the location of Nelsonville. When their reports come in if you want them I will gladly supply you with them.

Very respectfully,

JESSE W. WEIK

[*Statement of Colonel Chapman*]

CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS, January 3, 1896

Colonel Augustus H. Chapman: married daughter of Dennis Hanks and latter has been living with us off and on for many years; have often talked to him about the journey from Indiana to Kentucky in 1839; also with Sarah Bush Lincoln, his mother-in-law, who also lived in my family for some time prior to her death in 1869. Late in January, 1861, when Mr. Lincoln came to Charleston to visit his stepmother I rode with him to the graveyard in the country where his father was buried; he had spent the previous night at my house where the old lady then lived. We got to talking about the journey from Indiana in 1830; he agreed substantially with Hanks as to the route they took; said they went from Gentryville to Jasper in Dubois county; thence to Washington, Daviess county; thence to Vincennes where they crossed the Wabash; thence towards Lawrenceville where they turned north and pushed on to Palestine in Crawford county. At Palestine they

found a great many people drawn there by the land office. They kept on north paralleling the river to Darwin where they left the Wabash behind them. At this point they set off in a northwestwardly direction passing through Richwoods in Clark county; thence to a point about six miles west of Charleston called Dead Man's grove; thence north through Nelsonville, Moultrie county, to Decatur where they stopped.

[*Statement of Mrs. Chapman*]

Mrs. Harriett Chapman: wife of Colonel Chapman, daughter of Dennis Hanks and granddaughter of Sarah Bush Lincoln; says her grandmother told her the first printing press and the first Indians Mr. Lincoln ever saw were at Vincennes; on the way to Illinois she and her daughters rode on horseback a good part of the way; the small children were in the wagon; the sidesaddles were bought with the money that was due and paid to her in Kentucky, and which she rode there from Indiana, after her first husband's death, to collect.

[*Notes from Letter of Chapman to Herndon, October 8, 1865*]

Thomas Lincoln moved from Indiana to Illinois in a large four-horse wagon drawn by two yoke of oxen; only wagon he ever owned; brought with him some stock cattle; one horse; three beds and bedding; one bureau; one table; one set chairs; cooking utensils; clothing etc. There were three families together: Lincolns, Halls and Hanks. Squire Hall and Dennis Hanks had married sisters and they were stepdaughters of Thomas Lincoln. Abe Lincoln drove his father's ox team. The waters were very high at the time and they came near losing their team, wagon and contents in crossing the Okaw or Kaskaskia river.

LETTER OF JESSE W. WEIK WITH INCLOSURES

December 12, 1913

MR. C. M. THOMPSON,  
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS.

MY DEAR SIR:

The surveyor of Moultrie county not having promptly answered me, I wrote to my old friend ex-Senator Beveridge at Indianapolis

who was reared to manhood in Moultrie county. He knew nothing about Nelsonville, but wrote to his brother-in-law living in Sullivan. Herewith is his answer.

Hastily,

J. W. WEIK

[*Letter from Beveridge to Eden*]

December 10, 1913

MY DEAR EDEN:

Please do me the favor of finding out just where Nelsonville was and indicating on the inclosed map, sending it to Mr. Weik. I never heard of the place, but undoubtedly there was such a place.

If you don't recall it, some of the older men in the county surely will know about it.

Their statements must be credible as this is to go into an important book.

With best wishes,

Faithfully,

ALBERT J. BEVERIDGE

MR. E. B. EDEN,  
SULLIVAN, ILLINOIS.

[*Extract of Letter from Eden to Weik*]

MR. JESSE W. WEIK,  
GREENCASTLE, INDIANA

MY DEAR SIR:

The name of the first county seat was Nelson without the ville and was located about three and one-half miles from Sullivan the present county seat on the Okaw or Kaskaskia river.

\* \* \* \* \*

I have indicated on the inclosed outline the location of Nelson.

Yours,

E. B. EDEN

## LETTER OF SHUMAN TO WEIK

SULLIVAN, ILLINOIS, December 10, 1913

JESSE W. WEIK, Esq.,  
GREENCASTLE, INDIANA.

DEAR SIR:

Your letter of the 8th received and will be glad to give you such information as I can.

The village to which you refer is Nelson, instead of Nelsonville. Moultrie county has been my home for over fifty years and I am familiar with the towns, villages, etc., within the bounds of the county. We sometimes call the place old Nelson but never Nelsonville.

It is located about five miles southeast of Sullivan, on the P. D. & E. (now branch of I. C.) R. R. Nelson was for many years the only voting place in East Nelson township. If you have a county map you can locate it where sections 20, 21, 16, and 17 corner, as that is exactly where the town was laid off. Nelson was formerly of more importance than at present. At one time, I believe, there was talk of making it the county seat of Moultrie county. Lincoln attended court at Nelson.

At present about ten or a dozen families live at Nelson. My farm is located two miles west of Nelson on the railroad and as I lived on this place a number of years, I am well acquainted with the surrounding country. I should have stated that Nelson is located in East Nelson township and on the old wagon road between Sullivan and Charleston.

Trusting this will be of some assistance to you and assuring you of my willingness to aid you with any additional information you may desire, I am,

Yours very truly,  
CHAS. SHUMAN

## APPENDIX D

## LETTER OF JESSIE PALMER WEBER WITH INCLOSURES

December 13, 1912

MR. CHARLES M. THOMPSON,  
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS.

MY DEAR MR. THOMPSON:

I am inclosing to you a copy of an article which was published some years ago in the *Springfield News*. I do not know whether or not you have seen it. This Mr. Dowling is an employee here in the state house and is a very good and intelligent man, and extremely interested in this matter. It is quite possible that you have seen this account, but I thought it might be of interest to you, and I inclose it. Mr. Dowling also has a little state map which he has marked as the route which he thinks the Lincoln family took.

With kind regards, I am

Very truly yours,  
JESSIE PALMER WEBER

[*Extract from Springfield News*]

HOW LINCOLN CAME TO ILLINOIS.

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RECOLLECTIONS OF A MEMBER OF THE PARTY WHICH EMIGRATED  
FROM SPENCER COUNTY, IND., IN 1830.

---

TOLD BY ONE PRESENT.

---

Mrs. Sarah Jane Dowling Tells of Famous Journey and Gives  
Interesting Information about Lincoln Family.

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It was in the spring of 1830 according to the biographers that Abraham Lincoln with his father and stepmother and a party of relatives left his home in Spencer county, Indiana, and in regard to this hegira a new and interesting story has been learned from the

lips of one of those who were in the party. The story in its main points is not new, but it contains some facts that seem to have escaped the historians. Mrs. Sarah Jane Dowling of Charleston, a daughter of Dennis Hanks, nephew of Nancy Hanks, the mother of Abraham Lincoln tells the story and to her son, Dennis Hanks Dowling *The News* is indebted for it. Mr. Dowling, who is a clerk in the supply department of the secretary of state's office, relates the facts as they have been told to him often by his mother and from memoranda which he has preserved.

\* \* \* \* \*

The route followed by the party was by Vincennes, Indiana, and Lawrenceville, Illinois, up through Palestine and through the southern part of Clark and the western part of Coles county, near the site of Mattoon, and thence direct to Decatur. Mrs. Dowling says that they lived in Macon county for about a year when the chills and fever were so bad that they became discouraged and started back to Indiana. In the meantime Abraham Lincoln had left the party and started out in life for himself. Arriving at Wabash Point, where Mattoon now is, they came across two families, the Sawyers and Radleys, who were related to the Lincolns and these people induced them to remain in Coles county. Thomas Lincoln located eight miles south of Charleston and lived there the rest of his life with the exception of two years, that he and Dennis Hanks ran a grist mill on the Embarras river. This fact, Mrs. Dowling says, is not generally known. Thomas Lincoln moved back to the old home place, where he died in 1851, and is buried in the old Gordon graveyard, one and one-half miles west. His wife died in 1869, while she was living at the old home place with John J. Hall.

\* \* \* \* \*

According to the story of Mrs. Dowling the party traveled from Indiana in two wagons. One was drawn by oxen and the other by horses, the latter wagon being occupied by the Hall and Hanks family. The men of the party walked most of the way and each one carried an axe which they used to cut their way through bush and to build temporary bridges across creeks and sloughs. Among the men that walked were the three Halls, Squire, Alfred, and

Joseph; Dennis Hanks and Abraham Lincoln. "Uncle" Thomas Lincoln attended to the welfare of the teams and the women and children of the party.

\* \* \* \* \*

## LETTER OF D. H. DOWLING

January 1, 1913

CHARLES M. THOMPSON,  
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS.

DEAR SIR:

In regard to the route taken by the Lincoln family after they left Palestine, Illinois, for Macon county, there is very much doubt. But from conversations had with my mother on the subject my impression is that they came as described in my *Springfield News* article written several years ago. About four miles south and west of Mattoon, Illinois, at that time was a small settlement called Wabash Point where resided some relatives of Sarah Bush Lincoln by the name of Radley and Sawyer, and it was through the influence of these relatives that Thomas Lincoln and Dennis Hanks were induced to locate in Coles county, after they had decided to return to Indiana from Macon county, Illinois. At that time, there was no place called Mattoon and only a few houses in Charleston where Dennis Hanks and family located in 1832.

In early days there were several stage routes, leading through Charleston—one to St. Louis, one to Springfield, Illinois, one to Terre Haute, Indiana, and one to Vincennes, Indiana, and it is quite probable that after they left Palestine they came by the Vincennes route to Charleston and followed the state road west to Wabash Point and from thence to Macon county. For further information as to the state roads and stage lines leading from Charleston to Vincennes, Indiana, I would suggest that you write or have an interview with John Lee residing with his son, the Hon. C. C. Lee, Charleston, Illinois; also David Green, attorney-at-law, Toledo, Illinois. These gentlemen are very old men and would probably remember. The map I have is worth nothing for history; it is only my idea of the route.

Will be glad to be of assistance at any time.

Yours truly,  
D. H. DOWLING

## APPENDIX E

## STATEMENT OF Z. D. FRENCH

LAWRENCEVILLE, ILLINOIS

It is the tradition in and around the city of Lawrenceville, Illinois, that the Lincoln family in going from Indiana to Illinois crossed the Wabash river at Vincennes, Indiana, entered Lawrenceville on what is now State street, turned northward on what is now Tenth street, crossed the Embarras river at the point where a steel bridge now stands, and journeyed to Palestine.

Z. D. FRENCH

## APPENDIX F

Many people in Clark county hold the opinion that the Lincolns traveled in a northwesterly direction from York, on an old Indian trail, and not on to Darwin. Because of this opinion the evidence supporting the opinion is included in the report.

## EXTRACT FROM LETTER OF J. F. LAFFERTY

MARTINSVILLE, ILLINOIS, November 14th, 1912

MR. CHARLES M. THOMPSON,  
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS.

DEAR SIR:

Inclosed (in separate package per express) you will find skeleton map with but few streams marked, and none of the dirt roads. In fact there were no laid out roads before 1836 in this county. All travel was on trails. The "United States road" (so called by the engineers of the regular army) was laid out and surveyed—and the trees grubbed out in 1828 and 1829—but no grading done until 1830 and no bridges built until after that date—see records at Springfield on file. A record at Marshall shows a trail crossing this road and the North Fork of the Embarras in section 6 T. 10 N. R. 13 W. near the present town of Martinsville—but no other trail between it and the state line. The name

and rank of the officers who made this profile were on it but no date. Joshua Chancellor and his father's family came here from Kentucky in 1829, crossing the Wabash at Vincennes, and following the *Old Indian trail* from Palestine located a cabin on section 6 T. 10 N. R. 13 W. They had only two neighbors, Bena Dolson (west half of southwest quarter of section 7 T. 9 N. R. 12 W.) and George Parker located on the west half of southeast quarter of section 31 T. 12 N. R. 14 W., each about twelve miles away. There were thirteen tribes of Indians on the North Fork in this county and Crawford and Edgar counties, because General Harrison's treaty banished them west of the boundary line (see map.) The Piankashaw had a wigwam town of about five hundred on section 2 T. 11 N. R. 14 W.; the Mingo in T. 12 N. R. 14 W.; the Kickapoo and others in T. 9 N. R. 14 W. They left the valley, 1832, taking the trail northwest, crossing the fords on the river southeast of where Charleston is now located.

\* \* \* \* \*

The land records at Springfield will show you when each town and range was surveyed—and the field books of the surveyors where the land lines cross the creeks—timber—prairies—ravines—ridges—Indian trails, etc., etc.; and you can get them and you and your topographer can run them in on the skeleton map I send you so that you can see at a glance the whole route from the start to the finish.

Yours truly,  
JOHN F. LAFFERTY

EXTRACT FROM LETTER OF JOHN F. LAFFERTY

MARTINSVILLE, ILLINOIS, December 7, 1912

MR. CHARLES M. THOMPSON,  
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS.

DEAR SIR:

I have sent four blank townships to Mr. A. Harrison and requested him to mark the trail in T. 8 N. R. 11 W. (Crawford county) and also in T. 9 N. R. 11 W. and T. 9 N. R. 12 W., with the location of Fort Handy, etc. The Indian village was about three-

fourths of a mile northwest of Old York—near the center of section 33 T. 9 N. R. 11 W. (see map of Clark county). Fort Handy was on the northeast quarter of the southwest quarter of section 20 T. 9 N. R. 11 W., three-fourths of a mile south and one-fourth of a mile east of West Union (see map).

Mr. Harrison traced the trail from section 33 T. 8 N. R. 11 W. (Crawford county) commencing near the southeast corner of the southwest quarter of the southwest quarter of said section 33 T. 8 N. R. 11 W., thence north crossing the northeast corner of section 32 T. 8 N. R. 11 W., thence northwesterly through section 29 T. 8 N. R. 11 W., passing Hutsonville through the west side of the present town, thence northerly through southeast sections 20, 17, and 18, passing east of I. K. Musgrave's residence on the south half of the southeast quarter of section 18 T. 8 N. R. 11 W. Thence northerly through the northeast quarter of section 7 T. 8 N. R. 11 W. Thence north and east through sections 6 and 5 to the county line about one-half a mile west of the graveyard west of Old York. This tracing commences six miles north of the town of Palestine and is followed closely by a wagon road (see county map of Crawford county).

\* \* \* \* \*

You will notice that it [*the tracing by Mr. Harrison*] strikes the Old Indian (or Palestine) trail on section 7 T. 9 N. R. 12 W. at the house of Benjamin Dolson which was built in 1824. I have examined his tracing closely and compared it with old notes and surveys and believe it to be as nearly correct as can be made at this date.

The next house built on this trail was John Chancellor's on the west half of the northwest quarter of section 7 T. 10 N. R. 13 W., A. D. 1829 on the west side of the North Fork of the Embarras river on the second bottom near the ford and about one-half a mile above the present iron bridge across said stream on the United States road as it is called in the field notes of aforesaid road filed in the war department. There was no Martinsville in 1830, no Marshall, no Auburn, no Casey, no Greenup, no Grandview, no Charleston, no Mattoon, no Coles county, no McLansford, or Blake's Mill ford. There were no houses nearer John Chancellor's than George Parker's on the east half of the southwest quarter of

section 31 T. 12 N. R. 14 W., about two and a third or three miles north of this old Indian trail and twelve miles away. There were no stage lines or state roads or any other roads, but there were several tribes of Indians along the North Fork until the year 1832 when the agents of United States removed them taking this old trail to the northwest. As there were no roads at that date (1830) you had to follow the trails to be sure of getting anywhere. You will note the *Harrison boundary line* through the east part of the county. All the lands east of this line were surveyed some three to five years before those west of said line. When General W. H. Harrison made a treaty with the Piankashaw Indians this line was established giving a broad strip of land reaching east across the state of Indiana to the *Grouse land purchase*. (See maps accompanying reports of J. Butterfield, commissioner to the Hon. T. R. Ewing, secretary of the interior department, November 1849.) This treaty required the Indians to vacate all the lands east of this line on or before 1830, but United States did not move them from the North Fork until 1832, when they took the old trail to the northwest.

\* \* \* \* \*

JOHN F. LAFFERTY

P. S. I will try and get you the entry record this week.

J. F. L.

AFFIDAVIT OF ABRAM HARRISON

WEST UNION, CLARK COUNTY, ILLINOIS

December 11, 1912

TO THE LINCOLN WAY COMMISSION OF ILLINOIS,

I, Abram Harrison, a resident of York township, West Union, Clark county, Illinois, aged seventy-two years, have always resided all my life in this township. That I was well acquainted with Aaron Ball, deceased, an old resident of the town of York, Clark county, Illinois, and that about the years 1856 and 1858, his son Pemberton got into trouble out about Decatur or Springfield, Illinois, and they took his friends Richard Falley, a citizen of York, and also R. P. Ober, a merchant and a prominent

citizen of the town of York, and went to the trial; and that Mr. Ball got Abraham Lincoln, then a lawyer, to attend to his case thereby forming a close friendship with him. That when he told of being from York, Illinois, Mr. Lincoln informed him that as he came to Illinois, he passed by the town and on up north and then west to his home in Illinois. Mr. Ball informed me that he passed up through our neighborhood by the old road near our place and on to north and west of Colonel W. B. Archer's farm and on north and west on the old trail road out by Anglin's grove and on north from there into Illinois. He and Colonel W. B. Archer agreed that he had told each about the route and that the Lincolns had come by the way of Vincennes, Indiana, across the Wabash river at Vincennes north and up the river via Russellville, Palestine, Hutsonville, and York and thence out via or near the old Harrison and W. B. Archer farms, and by the Samuel Handy Brook's lane and thence north and then north and west. He understood that he passed from York up to and via the graveyard to Sam Lacey's, Brooks, and Handy lane via old Fort Handy, on up past John and Stephen Handy's and thence west and north and up by the prairie route to Grand View, Illinois, in Edgar county, Illinois, and stopped there a few days. Most of the people in the company stopped and settled in Edgar county and the Lincoln and Johnstone families went on farther north and west into Piatt county, or Moultrie county, and stayed there two years and then moved south to south side of Coles county, where they settled.

AFFIDAVIT OF ABRAM HARRISON

WEST UNION, CLARK COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
December 11, 1912

As per request of the commission of the Lincoln Way, I will say that the statement I make I will verify—that I, Abram Harrison, of West Union, Clark county, Illinois, am seventy-two years of age, was born and always lived in this York township, Clark county, Illinois, and that Colonel William B. Archer of Clark

county, on an adjoining farm near our own, and I often talked about matters and things; and he was a prominent man in this neighborhood and a member of the state legislature, county clerk of Clark county, and informed me that he well knew and was acquainted with Abraham Lincoln, our lamented martyred president; and he informed me that when he emigrated from Kentucky, Indiana, to Illinois that he passed through our immediate neighborhood and that he came into the state at Vincennes, Indiana, and crossed the Wabash river to Russellville, Illinois, thence Palestine, Hutsonville, York, and out by his home and ours, the old Henry Harrison farms east of Mr. Archer's farm, and on out the old road north and west into Illinois—the old trail road known as the old Indian trail—northwest; and that Lincoln so informed him at different times about his having passed through the county (Clark), and that he returned later, he and his father Thomas Lincoln, to York township north of York and bought seed and feed corn of George W. Catron on Walnut prairie on the farm now owned by J. S. Mundy and son.

## AFFIDAVIT OF ABRAM HARRISON

WEST UNION, CLARK COUNTY, ILLINOIS  
December 11, 1912

TO THE COMMISSION OF THE LINCOLN WAY:

Per request will say that I, Abram Harrison, aged seventy-two, a resident of West Union, York township, Clark county, Illinois, that I have always resided in this township, and that I was well acquainted with Richard Falley, an early settler of this township of York, now deceased, and that he informed me that he went with Aaron Ball out in Illinois, to Pemberton Ball's trial for Mr. Ball as witness in 1856 or 1858 or thereabout. That Abraham Lincoln was the attorney in the case and that he there formed the acquaintance of Lincoln and that he informed me that when informed that he lived at York, Illinois, he—Lincoln—told him that he knew the town as he had passed it on his way moving from Indiana to Illinois; that he came via Vincennes, north up the Wabash river via Russellville, Palestine, Hutsonville, and York

and on up by Brooks's, Lacey's, and Sam Handy's and north and west on the old trail road that passed near Fort Handy, John Handy's and then west and north along the old Indian trail route north and west out to Dolson prairie and north up into Illinois, to Grand View, Illinois, where most of the movers stopped and settled in Edgar county, Illinois. The Lincoln and Johnston families went on north and west up farther into Illinois, where they stayed about two years or made two crops, or tried to make them but the wet weather drowned them out, when they moved south into Coles county, and settled there; and that he later went or came over into the south part of Clark county, to get seed corn; he got his corn of G. W. Catron on Walnut prairie and went probably via Greenup, Casey, Martinsville, West Union and returned by same route.

#### AFFIDAVIT OF ABRAM HARRISON

WEST UNION, ILLINOIS, December 12, 1912

TO THE LINCOLN WAY COMMISSION OR WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

That I, Abram Harrison, seventy-two years of age and a resident of West Union, Clark county, Illinois, say that I was well acquainted with Major Robert Lacey, deceased, who was an old settler of York township, Clark county, Illinois, and lived and was raised one-half mile south of Fort Handy, and he has told me at different times that the Shaws, Albert and Gilliad, and William B. Archer, an old resident of this neighborhood, and all acquainted with Abraham Lincoln in his lifetime and that Mr. Lincoln told them (so they informed me) that the Lincolns—Thomas and Abraham—came through the southeast corner of Clark county, passed York and on up to Fort Handy, thence on north and west over the old trail road or near it on west and north into Illinois when they moved from Kentucky, Indiana, to Illinois, when they first came to the state of Illinois. Now Samuel Lacey, ex-sheriff of Clark county, and brother of Robert Lacey, also told me at different times the same story of the Lincoln family's route to Illinois.

\* \* \* \* \*

I certify this narrative is by good tradition but is correct as I verily believe, and being sworn to the same so declare under oath.

A. HARRISON

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 23d day of December, 1912.

RUSSELL POORMAN  
Notary Public

LETTER OF ABRAM HARRISON

WEST UNION, ILLINOIS, July 27, 1913

MR. CHARLES M. THOMPSON,  
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS.

MY DEAR MR. THOMPSON:

Yours of the 22d inst. is at hand and I make this reply. The old Indian trail leads off in a north to northwest direction. I send you a rough sketch of a map I made to describe the place of the old Henry Harrison residence, also William B. Archer's residence west of it on the line of the old trail. The trail divides and runs northwest on both the north and south side of a branch to a short distance north of the Harrison residence, when they come together again as I show you by map.

\* \* \* \* \*

Respectfully,

A. HARRISON

STATEMENT OF HON. H. C. BELL

[From the *Marshall (Illinois) Herald*, November 27, 1912]

WASHINGTON, D. C., November 23, 1912

I notice in one of the Marshall papers that Charles M. Thompson of the University of Illinois has just completed a map of the "Lincoln Way" in which he claims that the Lincoln caravan crossed the Wabash river at Vincennes, traveled the St. Louis stage

road to Lawrenceville, thence north through Palestine, York and Darwin, to Paris, etc.<sup>1</sup>

This has not been my idea of the route gathered from statements made by Colonel William B. Archer, Henry Harrison, Robert Lacy, Samuel Lacy, Chester Handy, and others who knew more about this "Lincoln Way" than any other men ever knew or will ever know, in all probability, because some of them, as well as some of the elder generation of Shaws actually saw the Lincoln caravan passing, and talking to Lincoln himself about this very matter at one time when in Marshall, and also on another occasion when he returned to York township, in his early manhood, or boyhood rather, for the purpose of buying seed corn, and who actually did buy it of farmers living in this vicinity, of the old Mattie Brown, Joe Cork, and Jim Mundy farms of lower Walnut Prairie.

William B. Archer, Sam Lacy, Robert Lacy, Henry Harrison, Chester Handy and other early settlers and residents of Clark county, as well as the elder Shaws often talked about this matter and they were perfectly conversant with the real route that the Lincoln caravan took in its passage through Clark county. Among the living residents of Clark county, himself, a surveyor, and with an extensive and accurate knowledge of early roads and Indian trails through Clark county, and the nephew of Henry Harrison and with long access to the field notes, etc., of his uncle Henry Harrison and there may possibly be others living who often talked with most of the men above mentioned and with others on this very subject of "The Lincoln Way," is Abe Harrison of York township and from what they have all said, and what Abe says now, this Lincoln Way never touched Darwin or Marshall, nor is it certain, or indeed likely that it ever passed through York. ■■■

According to the best information to be had, and from men like Sam Lacy, who never forgot anything he ever knew, William B. Archer, Henry Harrison, Robert Lacy, Chester Handy, the elder Shaws and Abe Harrison himself, the Lincoln caravan, which consisted of a number of Lincolns, Hanks, and other families, did cross the Wabash at Vincennes, thence to Lawrenceville up along the old Indian river trail to Russellville, through Palestine and Hutsonville, and thence on up to the Musgrave place in Crawford

<sup>1</sup>Mr. Bell appears to have been misinformed about the map.

county. It is not clear whether the caravan then passed through the Raccoon creek bottoms, by the lower road, as it is called and through York, or whether it kept on upon high grounds past the old Henry Holliday place and across the creek somewhere between the now Big Four railroad bridge and the place where the iron bridge spans Raccoon creek near the old Henry Holliday, Bill Lindley, John Lindley farms; but inasmuch as the Lincoln caravan reached the Musgrave place where the road between Hutsonville and York forks, in the early spring or in March when Raccoon creek was then most always high, and when it would have been difficult to get to York by the lower road, as it is called, it probably went either around by the Holliday place or crossed the creek near the Big Four railroad bridge, as it now is and then crossed the Aimes branch near the big spring where it would have been handy and convenient to pitch camp for the night, and on to the high dry ridge on the lands now owned by Dr. Cullop of West York, and keeping still on high and dry land and still pursuing the old Indian trail, the only sort of roads in those early days, on through the old Bradbury, Henry Prevo, Jonathan Hogue farms, the latter now owned by Samuel C. Prevo, and still on, not through York, necessarily, but on through the farms now owned by Robert Mitchell and Jim Mitchell, or the old Henry Prevo farm, and on through the home lands of Sam and Bob Lacy, and who, as I remember, actually knew of the passage of the Lincoln caravan through these parts of Clark county and thence turning in a north westernly direction, still pursuing the old Indian trail which was said to have traversed a hundred miles from Vincennes to Grandview, in Edgar county, where the Lincolns tarried for awhile without ever having to go over but one or two hills, one of them at the old Alf Cowden farm near the church, Potter Hall, I believe it is called.

Not only did the parties above mentioned tell Henry Harrison that the road ran along the route indicated above, but Henry Harrison told his nephew Abe Harrison often, that John Ketchum, Aaron Ball, Richard Falley, Robert P. Ober, all old residents of York, and others told him, Henry Harrison, that the way I have indicated was the real "Lincoln Way" through York township, and one of them remembered of its actually passing through the

site where York now stands, though some of the Lincoln caravan people probably did drift into York to get supplies for themselves and stock. Aaron Ball well knew Lincoln, in fact Lincoln defended Pemberton Ball, the son of Aaron Ball, for something he had done and Aaron Ball, nor whom no better or honester man ever lived, well knew Lincoln, having to consult him about the trouble of his son "Pem" as he was familiarly called and he told Henry Harrison that he talked with Lincoln about his route through Clark county and what route he took after leaving either York or its vicinity, and from the understanding of Mr. Ball, as well as by that of all the men above indicated, the "Lincoln Way" never passed through either Darwin nor Marshall, and it is not certain that it passed even through York, though it did certainly pass through it or half a mile west of the present site of that ancient village of the Wabash valley.

On this journey of the Lincolns from Kentucky to Grandview, and perhaps on to Charleston, and in about two years back to a place just south of the Cumberland county line called Goose Nest, not "Goose Neck" prairie, where the Lincolns settled, and it was from this point that Abe journeyed to Walnut Prairie to buy seed corn sometime afterwards, and where Abe bought corn of George W. Catron, off the farm as is understood now owned by Jim Mundy. This old Indian trail that Lincoln and his associate emigrants to the rich lands of Illinois, journeyed as it is believed passed near the old Hogue place where the writer as a bare footed boy dragged himself reluctantly, persuaded along by the sharp cutting hazel switch his fond mother wielded in the long, long ago. It crossed the spot along the line of where the Big Four railroad now runs on the lands I think now owned by my old boyhood and manhood friend, Jim Prevo; thence north, through the old Henry Harrison lands; through the land now owned by the Crow boys; then through the old Billy Archer lands now owned by the Bartlett's; thence on up past the old Alf Cowden farm and on to where Darien now stands, and thence in a northeasterly direction to Grandview, where the Johnson, O'Hair and a few other families stopped.

On this trip, the Lincolns had two wagons, one drawn by an ox team driven by young Abe, and the other driven by Abe's father,

and so this is the general route which the "Lincoln Way" dragged its weary way along in those far off and hazy times of the fast fading past as stated by such men as Sam and Robert Lacy, Aaron Ball, Richard Falley, Robert Ober, Henry Harrison, William B. Archer, Chester Handy and now by Abe Harrison who had his information from these men, who is himself a surveyor and a perfect mine of old road and Indian trail lore and who is firm in the belief that the "Lincoln Way" as it is called did not touch Darwin or Marshall and probably not even York closer than half a mile, the old Reason Bell farm now owned by Robert and Jim Nicol. And so we believe that Professor Charles M. Thompson of the University of Illinois, in his just completed map of the far famed "Lincoln Way" is off in his location of the route the Lincolns took in passing through Clark county, as it now is, and as for me, I would rather have the intimate and first hand information of such men as I have named who either lived in the vicinity of the old Indian trail route the Lincolns took and traveled in, their passage from Vincennes and especially through Clark county, where they then lived or else had obtained it first hand from those who knew to a certainty to the Lincolns' final stopping place, at least for some years, on Goose Nest Prairie, Cumberland county, Illinois, supplemented by the varied and accurate road knowledge of Abe Harrison, than to take the word of the noted professor in his aforesaid map, and I firmly believe that the one I have named was, in the main the route the Lincolns took in their journey from Vincennes to Lawrenceville, Russellville, Palestine, Hutsonville, west of York, out by Alf Cowden place, and on to Darien up to Grandview, where part of the caravan halted forever more, and on to Charleston, and finally back to Goose Nest Prairie where the Lincolns finally unshipped their freight, where Uncle Abe unyoked his steers and settled down to prepare himself, at least partially for the presidency, the emancipation of a race and his final exit to immortal fame through the gateway of life, opened for him by the pistol shot of a dastardly assassin on the fourteenth of April, 1865, at Ford's theatre in this city.<sup>1</sup>

H. C. BELL

<sup>1</sup> It seems unnecessary to point out a number of misstatements of historical facts in the preceding article, for they have no bearing whatever on the investigation.

## AFFIDAVIT OF JAMES BENNETT

STATE OF ILLINOIS, }  
CRAWFORD COUNTY } ss.

WEST YORK, ILLINOIS, August 12, 1913

I was born in Crawford county, Illinois, near the present town of West York, in 1822, and have been a resident of this section nearly all my life. I was acquainted with the early roads and trails of Clark and Crawford counties, and have heard the older people of this neighborhood talk of the Lincolns going through here on their journey from Gentryville, Indiana, to Decatur, Illinois, in 1830, I myself being at that time eight years of age.

JAMES BENNETT

Witness

EMMA KNIGHT

CHARLES W. MOORE

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 12th day of August, 1913.

CHARLES W. MOORE  
Notary Public

## APPENDIX G

## LETTER OF JOSEPH A. HALL

JANESVILLE, ILLINOIS, January 9, 1913

MR. CHARLES M. THOMPSON,  
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS.

MY DEAR MR. THOMPSON:

Your letter of the 7th at hand and was very glad to hear from you. My father said that they came through Palestine and that they followed an old Indian trail northwest from there, as there were no main roads as there are today, as they had to pick their way as best they could. Dennis Hanks often visited my father here at the old cabin and stayed as long as a month at a time, and I have heard them both talk about how they came and what a time they had on the road and they both agreed that they

came through Palestine in the direction I have mentioned. My father said: "Dennis, don't you mind when we crossed Hurricane how we all like to got drowned?" I have also heard my father and Dennis Hanks both say that there was a deer lick near the farm, that night overtook them, and they camped over night. My father said that they camped at Muddy Point near the little town of Paradise and that they stopped with a family named Radley. My father said his name was Ichabod Radley. The bridge that Dennis Hanks worked on was built across the Embarras river at the McCann's ford. I never heard my father or uncle Dennis Hanks speak of a family by the name of Harrison.

I have heard my father say that they traveled north through the western edge of what is now Mattoon, that they could have entered land where Mattoon is now for \$1.25 an acre but it was so low and swampy that nobody could live there.

Yours truly,

JOSEPH A. HALL

## APPENDIX H

### LETTER OF SECOND ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL

January 20, 1913

MR. CHARLES M. THOMPSON,  
509 EAST SPRINGFIELD AVENUE,  
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS.

SIR:

Receipt is acknowledged of your letter of the 7th instant, requesting further information concerning the early mail routes in eastern Illinois in order to enable you to determine the route taken by the Lincoln family in removing from Indiana to Illinois in 1830.

In reply I have to inform you that the records of this office indicate that the contract on route no. 71: Vandalia, Cold Spring, Shelbyville, Locust Grove, Cochran's Grove, Paradise (Hanson's), Cole C. H. (Morton's store), Bachelorsville and Sutherland, to Paris (Edgar county), Illinois, was for service commencing January 1, 1830. It appears, however, that a postoffice was established at Coles Court House in Coles county, March 31, 1831.

It cannot be determined at what point the Wabash river was crossed by route no. 74: Vincennes, Indiana, Palestine (Crawford county), Hutsonville, York, Clark C. H. (Darwin), Lexington, Paris, Ono or Union, Bloomfield, Carolus, and Georgetown to Danville, Illinois. There does not appear to have been any route to Decatur from Springfield and Shelbyville. The only route to Decatur in operation in 1830 was route no. 83: Decatur (Macon county) Randolph's Grove, Bloomington, O'Hara and Chestnut to Chicago.

Very respectfully,

JOSEPH STEWART

Second Assistant Postmaster General

## APPENDIX I

### AFFIDAVIT OF LEWIS E. MOORE

I, Lewis E. Moore of Janesville, Illinois, was born in the year 1840 about three-fourths of a mile northeast of what is known as the Abraham Lincoln log cabin in Coles county, Illinois, which was situated two and one-half miles northeast of Janesville, Illinois. I personally knew Thomas Lincoln and his last wife. I also knew Abraham Lincoln and I also lived within one-half mile of Thomas Lincoln all the time he lived on the said Lincoln farm, two and one-half miles northeast of Janesville, and went to the graveyard when Thomas Lincoln was buried and have heard him tell of his early days and travels and from the best of my judgment as I now remember from all that he told me, he crossed the Ambraw river on coming to this county from Indiana at what is known as the McCann's ford, just about one-half a mile north of due east of the Lincoln farm.

L. E. MOORE

J. A. SCHOMMER,

Notary Public

Witness

J. D. MARTIN

ABE L. HALL

W. J. MOORE

## APPENDIX J

## STATEMENT OF D. T. GORDON

The Lincoln Way from Indiana to Illinois crossed the Wabash river at Vincennes, Indiana, then taking the Cincinnati and St. Louis plank road to Lawrenceville, Illinois, recrossed the Embarras river at a ford four miles northwest of Lawrenceville at a place called Sharletsville. Thence near Hen Peck [?] or now Oblong, Crawford county, thence to Long Point, thence near Union Center, Cumberland county, thence to the Embarras river at the McCann's ford, thence by the Gordon graveyard where both my grandfathers lived at that time, Grandfather Gordon and Grandfather Barham, thence to Paradise on the Little Wabash river. My father was in Captain Abe Lincoln's company during the Black Hawk Indian war and I have heard my father tell this story many times. My grandfathers came to Coles county in 1823, were the first white settlers in what is Goosenest Prairie and my father was the first white man married in the detached part of Clark county where the county seat was at Darwin on the Wabash river. My grandfather Gordon gave the land that is known as the Gordon graveyard where Thomas Lincoln is buried; this I know by hearing my father Patrick H. Gordon tell it.

Signed, sealed and delivered this the 15th day of February, 1913.

D. T. GORDON  
Age 68 years

## APPENDIX K

NOTES FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT RECORDS,  
COLES COUNTY, ILLINOIS

Paradise was a postoffice in 1830 located at the house of George Hansen who lived on the state road from Paris to Shelbyville. (See Appendix H.) In August, 1836 Paradise was laid out in section 33, T. 12 N. R. 11 E., on state road running from Charleston to Shelbyville. Later this site was abandoned and is now farm land. In February, 1837, another town called Paradise was laid out in section 8, T. 11 N. R. 11 E. The latter is the location of the present Paradise. See plat book in circuit clerk's office, Charleston, Illinois.

## APPENDIX L

## NOTES ON THE CUMBERLAND ROAD

Contracts made during September and October, 1830 for opening the Cumberland road in Illinois. 21 Congress, 2 session, house of representatives, executive documents, 3: doc. 73.

"At the time operations were first commenced on the Cumberland Road in Illinois, there was, from the state line to Vandalia, but a single house on the road, and that was near the eastern extremity." 23 Congress, 1 session, house of representatives, executive documents, 5: doc. 417.

## APPENDIX M

## STATEMENT OF HANNAH E. ALLISON

LERNA, ILLINOIS, January 11, 1913

Mrs. Hannah Eveline Allison born at Farmington, Bedford county, Tennessee, in 1822; moved to Illinois in 1834, first stopped at Muddy Point. The road across the McCann's ford I saw in the winter of 1834 and it came west, then south, then west, then north, then angled across northwest to Muddy Point out to Paradise.

HANNAH E. ALLISON

## AFFIDAVIT OF JOSEPH ARMSTRONG

JANESVILLE, ILLINOIS, December 16, 1912

I, Joseph Armstrong, of Charleston, Illinois, was born in Highland county, Virginia, August 11, 1823 and came to Coles county, Illinois, in 1844, and have lived within four miles of the Lincoln homestead ever since, and personally knew Abraham Lincoln and Thomas Lincoln, and Thomas Lincoln's last wife, Sarah Bush, and was at Thomas Lincoln's funeral, which was preached by John Adams, a Methodist minister. I have seen Abraham Lincoln on different trips to the homestead, as many as four different times; I helped build a bridge across the Ambraw river at the

McCann's ford in 1846 and there was a crossing at the McCann's ford for a number of years previous to this time which was the main place to cross the river at that time, and the road at that place east of the river after winding around some ran in a southeast direction. There was a postoffice at Campbell, when I first came to this country and had been there I understand a number of years before. The postmaster was Eugene Campbell, who kept the postoffice at the edge of what was called gooseneck prairie, a scope of country about three or four miles square, adjacent to the Lincoln homestead. The contractors I worked for in building the bridge across the river at McCann's ford were Gilpin and Leach.

JOSEPH ARMSTRONG

Subscribed and sworn to before me this the 17th day of December 1912.

GEORGE GORDON  
Notary Public

AFFIDAVIT OF JOHN W. RODGERS

JANESVILLE, ILLINOIS, December 3, 1912

I, John W. Rodgers of Lerna, Illinois, was born in 1832 in Sangamon county, Illinois, and came to Coles county, Illinois, the same year. I was personally acquainted with Thomas Lincoln and his last wife, and also acquainted with Abraham Lincoln, and also knew when Thomas Lincoln lived on what is known as the Lincoln farm two and a half miles northeast of Janesville, Illinois. I further know that John McCann, an early settler, lived about forty rods east of what is known as the McCann's ford and from whom the ford took its name and said McCann was living there even before and while Thomas Lincoln lived on the above named farm.

JOHN W. RODGERS

Subscribed to and sworn to before on this the 3d day of December, 1912.

GEORGE GORDON  
Notary Public

## STATEMENT OF JESSIE PHIPPS

JANESVILLE, ILLINOIS, January 14, 1913

I, Jessie Phipps, was born in the year 1833 in Marion county, Ohio, and came to Illinois in 1840 to Coles county, and have lived sometimes nearer, and never to exceed three miles from the Lincoln homestead ever since. And the first road, and the main traveled road I ever knew running from the McCann's ford was in a westerly direction to about one mile, and thence south one-half mile, thence west by the Lincoln homestead, thence intersecting the Charleston and Greenup road just west of the Lincoln homestead, thence north to the north edge of Farmington, thence west to about two and one-half miles, thence north one-half mile, thence west intersecting the Paradise road.

JESSIE PHIPPS

## STATEMENT OF L. E. MOORE

JANESVILLE, ILLINOIS, January 10, 1913

I, L. E. Moore, was born in 1840 in a cabin right by the side of the road that ran from McCann's ford to the Lincoln homestead and said road then ran practically the same as it does now with probably one very small angle and ran by the Lincoln homestead and to the west side of the farm and then near that point ran northwest by the Gordon cemetery, ran on west.

L. E. MOORE

Witness

J. D. MARTIN

A. L. HALL

## APPENDIX N

NOTES FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT RECORDS,  
COLES COUNTY, ILLINOIS

"David Dryden and others presented a petition praying a view of a county road, commencing on the Clark County line at the head of long point creek on a path now used, thence west to

Embarra River at what is called Logans ford near where John McCann now lives thence through Goosenest prairie, near Indian creek, thence the nearest and best road to Shelby County line in a direction to Shelbyville."

## APPENDIX O

## AFFIDAVIT OF JOHN W. CAIN

JANESVILLE, ILLINOIS, December 16, 1912

I, John W. Cain of Charleston, Illinois, was born in the year 1840, in Monroe county, Indiana, and came to Coles county, Illinois, in the year 1865, August 2d, and have lived within ten miles of the Lincoln homestead, every year since I came here, with the exception of one year, and the majority of that time, have lived within four miles of the Lincoln homestead, and for twenty years lived within one and one-half miles of the Lincoln homestead in Coles county, Illinois, and I also have been acquainted with, and associated as a particular friend with John J. Hall for forty years before he died, April 4, 1909, he being one of the party that came over with the Lincolns, and I swear on oath that I heard John J. Hall say that on crossing the Hurricane, a stream southeast of here a short way, that on coming from Indiana, the wagon mired down in this stream and that they had quite a time crossing the same which is located southeast of said Lincoln homestead.

JOHN W. CAIN

Signed and sworn to this the 17th day of December 1912.

GEORGE GORDON  
Notary Public

## APPENDIX P

## AFFIDAVIT OF ROBERT FRANCIS

STATE OF ILLINOIS, }  
COUNTY OF CLARK } ss.

This the 28th day of December, A. D. 1912, personally appeared before the undersigned, a notary public in and for said county and

state, Robert Francis, a resident of Martinsville, Illinois, who being duly sworn on oath states as follows:

That he was born in England in 1832 and came to this country in 1837, and has lived in this county over seventy years. That, to the best of his knowledge and belief, in March, 1863 he was on his way from Martinsville to Charleston, traveling on foot on the old York and Charleston road; that when between what was known as the Rev. Lee place and the Round Grove, he was overtaken by a man in a wagon, who on learning that he was on his way to Charleston, invited him to ride. In the conversation that followed the name of Abraham Lincoln was brought up in connection with the Lincoln-Douglas debate at Charleston. The man said that he had seen Thomas and Abe Lincoln near that place, when they moved from Indiana to Illinois, and that he could show him where they camped near what was then known as the blue mound; that he was there watching for deer when the Lincoln caravan drove up and camped for the night; that he talked with Thomas Lincoln for about an hour asking him his name and giving his, and that during the conversation he noticed Abe Lincoln, whom he judged at the time to be about seventeen or eighteen years old, as he busied himself about the camp work, and remarking his awkward and uncouth appearance, which was recalled to his mind in later years, on hearing Lincoln plead law.

And affiant further states that this blue mound was on the left of both the then traveled wagon road and the old Indian trail, and was northwest of what is now known as the round grove in section 29, Parker township, Clark county, Illinois, and that they stood up in the wagon to see better when the man pointed out the Lincoln camping place.

ROBERT FRANCIS

Witness

H. GASAWAY

JAMES W. McNARY

E. S. CLAYTON

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 28th day of December,  
A. D. 1912.

H. GASAWAY  
Notary Public

## APPENDIX Q

## EXTRACTS FROM STATE LAWS

County roads leading from Wabash river, opposite Vincennes through Lawrence, Crawford, Clark, Edgar and Vermilion counties to Danville are declared state roads. Road passing through Allison Prairie, called the Christian Settlement, and from thence to Palestine declared part of state road. *Revised code of 1829*, p. 133.

## EXTRACT FROM THE MISSOURI REPUBLICAN, JULY 3, 1822

Mail went by Ellison (Allison) Prairie, Palestine, York, Aurora, Grand Prairie, in Clark county to Clinton.

NOTES FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT RECORDS OF  
LAWRENCE COUNTY, ILLINOIS

Ferry across Embarras river at Lawrenceville—north and south—established June, 1825.

Ferry at Yellow Banks by Nabb and Fail authorized June, 1825.

Ferry established at Vincennes, September, 1825.

March, 1830. Henry Du Bois presented petition to change road from Vincennes (opposite Vincennes) to Palestine. Petition reads as follows:

“Commencing  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile above stream mill in T. & D. Harrison’s land then running nearly on the bank of the Wabash River to the house of Littleton Timm’s, thence to the farm of Mr. Cockran thence to mouth of Bell Grove; to farm of Dr. Keykendall where it will intersect Palestine Road.”

## APPENDIX R

NOTES FROM COUNTY COMMISSIONERS COURT RECORDS OF  
COLES COUNTY

In March, 1831 Ichabod Radley lived in Wabash precinct, which included the Paradise settlement, sometimes called the Wabash Point settlement.

## APPENDIX S

## LETTER OF JAMES A. STEELE

SULLIVAN, ILLINOIS, November 12th, 1914

CHARLES M. THOMPSON,  
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS.

DEAR SIR:

In reply to yours of the 9th re the Lincoln road through Moultrie county, will say that I have seen Mr. James Purvis, who is our oldest resident in this vicinity, and he has prepared a map of the first road through here which is undoubtedly the one we want. I send you this map under separate cover.

The road entered Moultrie county from Coles county near the Jim Elder postoffice, then across the Kaskaskia, or Okaw as it is called here, where there was a ford called Willow ford near what is now known as Spaugh bridge, then to Julia Ann tavern, from there to what is now Chipps station on the C. & E. I. R. R. where there was, and still is, a good spring which was then a favorite camping place on this road. From there it went to the Black Horse tavern in Lovington, thence west to a point south of Decatur thus entering Decatur *from the south* but Mr. Purvis is not familiar with that part of the route.

The west branch of the Kaskaskia, where they would cross it between Lovington and Decatur, is not much more than a small creek and would afford no serious obstacle to their passage.

Mr. Purvis told me this morning that he thought you might get some further information from Robert Bracken of Cherrie Vale, Kansas, who was born near here.

Hoping this may throw some light on the topic in which we are all interested I am

Respectfully yours,

JAMES A. STEELE

## APPENDIX T

## EXTRACT FROM LETTER OF JUDGE J. O. CUNNINGHAM

URBANA, ILLINOIS, October 30, 1911

MR. CHARLES M. THOMPSON,  
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS

MY DEAR SIR:

Yours asking for Mr. Lincoln's remarks "about having come through Decatur on their way to Macon County," is before me.

Major Henry C. Whitney in his "Life on the Circuit with Lincoln" alludes to this visit to Decatur and quotes his recollections of what Mr. Lincoln said upon that occasion, using these words: "After supper we strolled out for a walk and when we came to the court house Lincoln walked out a few steps in front and after shifting his position two or three times he said, as he looked up at the building, partly to himself and partly to me, "Here is the exact spot where I stood by our wagon when we moved from Indiana twenty-six years ago; this isn't six feet from the exact spot." He said further to me, "We came into town and kept on and made our first stop right in front of the court house, where we now are."

\* \* \* \* \*

He then told me he had frequently thereafter tried to locate the route by which they had come; and that he had decided that it was near the line of the main line of the Illinois Central railroad.

My recollection of the event is about as Major Whitney has here given it. Although he in his account of the Decatur visit has ignored the presence in the company of any but himself and Lincoln, there were in fact several of us.

In my paper read before the state historical society at the annual meeting in January, 1905, on page 104 of our publication no. 10, in treating of the Bloomington convention of 1856, I speak at large of this visit to Decatur and of the persons with Mr. Lincoln.

Yours,  
J. O. CUNNINGHAM

## APPENDIX U

EXTRACT FROM THE CHARLESTON DAILY NEWS,  
SEPTEMBER 12, 1912

The *Daily News* has been asked where and how the Lincoln-Hanks people came from Indiana to Illinois. It is certain they came in the spring of 1831 by going to Vincennes, then to Lawrenceville and started for Vandalia, going in what we would now call the Cumberland Road at Ewington. They went to Vandalia, and there they called on William Lee D. Ewing, asking for the Radleys in Coles County, and John Hanks, somewhere up in the "Sangamaw" country. Ewing seemed to have known the Hanks and Lincolns in Kentucky but while the writer asked Dennis Hanks how they happened to know Ewing, the answer was lost by an interruption.

Ewing was either a state senator or something like that at the time and he seemed to know where Hanks and Radley lived, for he explained that while there was a bridge across the Kaskaskia or Okaw river at Vandalia, there were no bridges up on the Decatur branch of the Sangamon river. That they would have to back track to Ewington, which seemed to be a town Ewing was interested in, and then they should go northeast on the braeks [?] between the Kaskaskia Little Wabash and Embarras rivers, which passed through Coles county, and go to Paradise, where Radley was running for coroner in the new county of Coles, the election being in August. They went there and stayed between spring and fall and then went to John Hanks' clearing in Macon county. That they crossed the Kaskaskia or Okaw either at Cooks Mills on the Charleston and Springfield trace, or at Bagdad on the Paris and Springfield trace which join northwest and it was thought there was where a mighty city would be located, but not so.

Thomas Lincoln and wife lived near the John Hanks vicinity that winter of 1831-32 and then went back to Paradise as they had the ague and wanted to go back to Indiana but could not raise the money.

Abraham Lincoln was of age and stayed with John Hanks and never lived in Coles county. The "calvacade" never went to Springfield.

The Lincolns except Abraham, and the Johnstons and Hanks except John settled in Coles and hundreds and hundreds of their descendants live in Coles to this date.

These are the facts about "Marking the Lincoln Way," which was the most egregious fake ever touted in any country. And, yet, there must be salaries, you must know.—J. K. Rardin, Charleston, September 10, 1912.

EXTRACT FROM THE CHARLESTON DAILY NEWS,  
NOVEMBER 29, 1912.

The alleged professor in Champaign who is talking about the Lincoln Way is a fool. Again, and again, the Lincolns did not go to Vincennes, but to Mt. Carmel. They never crossed the Embarras at all, but having meagre horse sense they never crossed the Little Wabash till they got near the source about Ewington. They never went to Paris because there was no national road at that time and the county seat was near Martinsville. The nearest government land was at Palestine, and the road went as near as possible to Charleston where everybody walked or rode horseback to Palestine and it took two days, as any old settler yet living can tell you, and the records and affidavits say so. The old Coles County History tells so and gives the old settlers and many histories of them telling how they came and entered.

Nobody was such a fool as to go northeast to Paris from Palestine and then go southeast, losing about 30 miles out of the way, when it was but 25 miles on the York and Charleston road which was a freight trail to the nearest point on the Wabash river.

Besides, all the Lincolns, Hanks and the family said they did not come through Charleston or Paris; that if they had gone to Paris they would have taken the St. Mary and Paris-Springfield trace, which was direct to the Hanks near Decatur and twelve miles south of Charleston and it was on a much higher ridge which had been made by the last glacial overflow.

This portion of Eastern Illinois knows the Lincolns and Hanks but do not know the Doc Cook authorities named in the alleged Lincoln Way report.

## APPENDIX V

## EXTRACT FROM ILLINOIS INTELLIGENCER, FEBRUARY 12, 1831

Organization of Coles County.—The new County of Coles, which was created at the present session of the Legislature, has been organized, and Ambrose Yocom, elected sheriff; George M. Hanson, A. Caldwell and Isaac Lewis, County Commissioners, and Ichabod Radley, coroner. This is expeditious business.

## APPENDIX W

## LETTER OF G. M. McCONNEL

FAIRHOPE, ALABAMA, March 6, 1913

CHAS. M. THOMPSON, ESQ.,  
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS.

MY DEAR SIR:

I have your letter of the 21st ult. touching what I heard my father say of having seen the Lincoln family on its way into Illinois. Sometime about 1830 or 1831—I have no means here of verifying the precise time, though it may be readily learned from the Illinois legislation records—my father, Murray McConnel, was a member of the lower house of the legislature from Morgan county. He was a resident of that county—in Jacksonville—from about 1827 to his death in 1869.

About 1858, or about the time Mr. Lincoln was winning his first real fame, I heard my father telling some gentlemen whose identity I then knew but have now forgotten, of the first time he ever saw "Abe." As I recall it he told them of being in a town on the Okaw (now Kaskaskia) river. I understood the town to be Vandalia, then the state capital, and I got the impression that he was there in connection with his membership in the legislature. It is possible that his errand there may have been one of business with the state supreme court, but I was impressed that it was legislative, and quite certainly in my memory it was about the time named, 1830 or 31.

The Okaw was "out of its banks," much more on the town side than on the other. Coming out, with two or three others from a house of the town—a tavern as I understood—not far from noon, the attention of the party was drawn to a wagon, obviously a "mover's" outfit, then approaching from the east to the river and across the stream from the town. The bridge was quite close to the farther side of the swollen stream, and was not submerged though the water was nearly or quite up to the floor. Someone from the wagon was examining the narrow strip of water at the farther end of the bridge, evidently with a view to testing the practicability of crossing. The onlookers knew that it would be easy to reach and cross the bridge, but knew also that the road from the hither end of the bridge across a wide, flat bottom to the town was an earth "thrown up" from the earth at the sides. If that could be followed it was comparatively a good road for those days, but if a stranger to its course strayed into the ditches or pools at the side, it would be almost certain disaster.

The man from the wagon crossed the water to the bridge, sounding it as he came with a long, wooden, handle of the ox whip he carried, then crossed the bridge and waded out toward the town, again sounding the water, from side to side, occasionally pausing and appearing to be "taking his bearings," and determining the course the thrown up roadway must follow, as well as was possible from seeing where the road climbed the slope to the town. They supposed this leader would cross on foot—"he's a tall fellow," said one to the other, "the water is not up to his hips"—and that the others in the wagon would drive close after him. But presently, after a long and careful look ahead, the man went back to the bridge, stopped, beckoned to the wagon passengers to drive to and over the bridge, vaulted onto the back of one of the oxen of the team and drove boldly out along the roadway, of which he had explored only the beginning.

The party of onlookers then became deeply interested and knowing the risk if the team missed the road, went quickly toward the river and began to cast about for means of assisting should need arise. There were two or three narrow escapes from wandering from the way, boldly, and skilfully met each time by the—as they soon could see—youthful driver, and in a short time the

team drew out of the water and stopped to rest, the long legged youth calmly dropping from his ox-back seat and investigating the condition of the wagon and contents. He was, or seemed to be, some seventeen years old, bare headed and bare footed, with his long legs thrust through a pair of buck skin trousers which the water they had been in had shrivelled up till they did not reach his knees.

"That," said my father, "was my first sight of Abe Lincoln. I liked his cool nerve and his cheery laugh as he looked at his shrunken trousers and cheerily told us who the family were, and where they were going. He is the same kind of fellow yet."

I was too young then, and too eager in my own opening life to appreciate what such recollections might be worth, and after the war was over I was still too eager in my own pursuits, and it was too short a time after the war, when my father followed Mr. Lincoln into "the silent land" for me to even begin to "measure the perspective" and the real altitude of many of the men whom I, as a boy and youth, had known.

I am sorry I did not ask endless questions and learn a thousand details, but I did not, and I can only impart these dim outlines. I cannot guess if what I have told you will be of any value to you or not, but valuable or worthless they are truthful as far as they go and I give them to you more than gladly.

Faithfully yours,

H. M. McCONNEL

## APPENDIX X

### LETTER OF COMMISSIONER OF GENERAL LAND OFFICE

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GENERAL LAND OFFICE

WASHINGTON, January 21, 1913

MR. CHAS. M. THOMPSON,  
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS.

SIR:

Upon receipt of your letter of January 11, 1913, a search was begun to obtain any facts required to meet your questions as to the

location of the Cumberland road in Illinois, and I regret to say that no data of value have thus far been obtained.

This national road was authorized by act of Congress of March 29, 1806 (Statute laws, 2: 357), to be built westward from Cumberland, Maryland. This place was important as the inland terminus of the commercial transportation project of water navigation upon the Potomac river, which was conceived by George Washington before the Revolution, and actively promoted, completed and carried on until 1825 under the plans which he, as a civil engineer, made and supported during his life after the war.

A subsequent act of July 2, 1836, provided means for extending the road through Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, because the act of May 15, 1820, had empowered the president to appoint commissioners to lay out said road from Wheeling, Virginia, to the left bank of the Mississippi river (Statute laws, 3: 604); and from this it is believed that all papers of such appointments, and the returns or reports of the survey under them, must have been made to the United States treasury department, which was intrusted with the appropriations and the disbursements of expense. This belief is supported by the fact that no such returns of survey are known to be in this office.

While the date of laying out the road westward from Terre Haute is not of record here, it must be subsequent to 1820; and your desire to have its position made known through the return of rectangular township surveys, cannot be gratified, because all that area was surveyed between 1816 and 1822, when the Cumberland road *had not reached* Illinois.

Neither is there any information to be derived from those early surveys on the position of Indian trails. A careful inspection of the plats of survey (originals of which are on file and open to examination in the office of auditor of state, Springfield, Illinois) has shown that the surveyors noted only their intersection of brooks and creeks, and made no note of trails or roads.

This office would be glad to assist in the worthy plan of making known the exact location of the road which was so important eighty years ago, and by which the Lincoln family is said to have reached the home in the Sangamon region, but there seems to be no record

here accessible. Further inquiry will be made when opportunity occurs, at the Library of Congress, and if useful facts are found, you will be further advised.

Very respectfully,

FRED DENNETT  
Commissioner

## APPENDIX Y

### EXTRACT FROM CHICAGO DEMOCRAT, SEPTEMBER 22, 1858

"Arriving at Charleston, a vast throng was found waiting the procession, and welcomed it with cheers and huzzas. From the Capitol House to the Court House, on the opposite side of the street, a banner was stretched, on which was sketched an emigrant wagon, drawn by two yoke of oxen, driven by a young stripling, and over the caricature the words "Abe's entrance into Charleston thirty years ago." When it is remembered that thirty years ago Mr. Lincoln emigrated to this place from Kentucky, driving his father's team *a la* design on the banner, this had peculiar significance. It attracted much attention during the day." [Referring to the Lincoln-Douglas debate at Charleston.]

## APPENDIX Z

### LETTER OF W. O. BENNETT

CHARLESTON, ILLINOIS, November 14, 1912

MR. CHARLES M. THOMPSON,  
CHAMPAIGN, ILLINOIS.

DEAR MR. THOMPSON:

I had a talk with Mrs. Chapman last evening and she said there was no truth whatever in the report that the Hanks family stopped at Grandview and located in Edgar county, while the Lincolns went on to Decatur. She said that the entire party went all the way together and all located in Macon county.

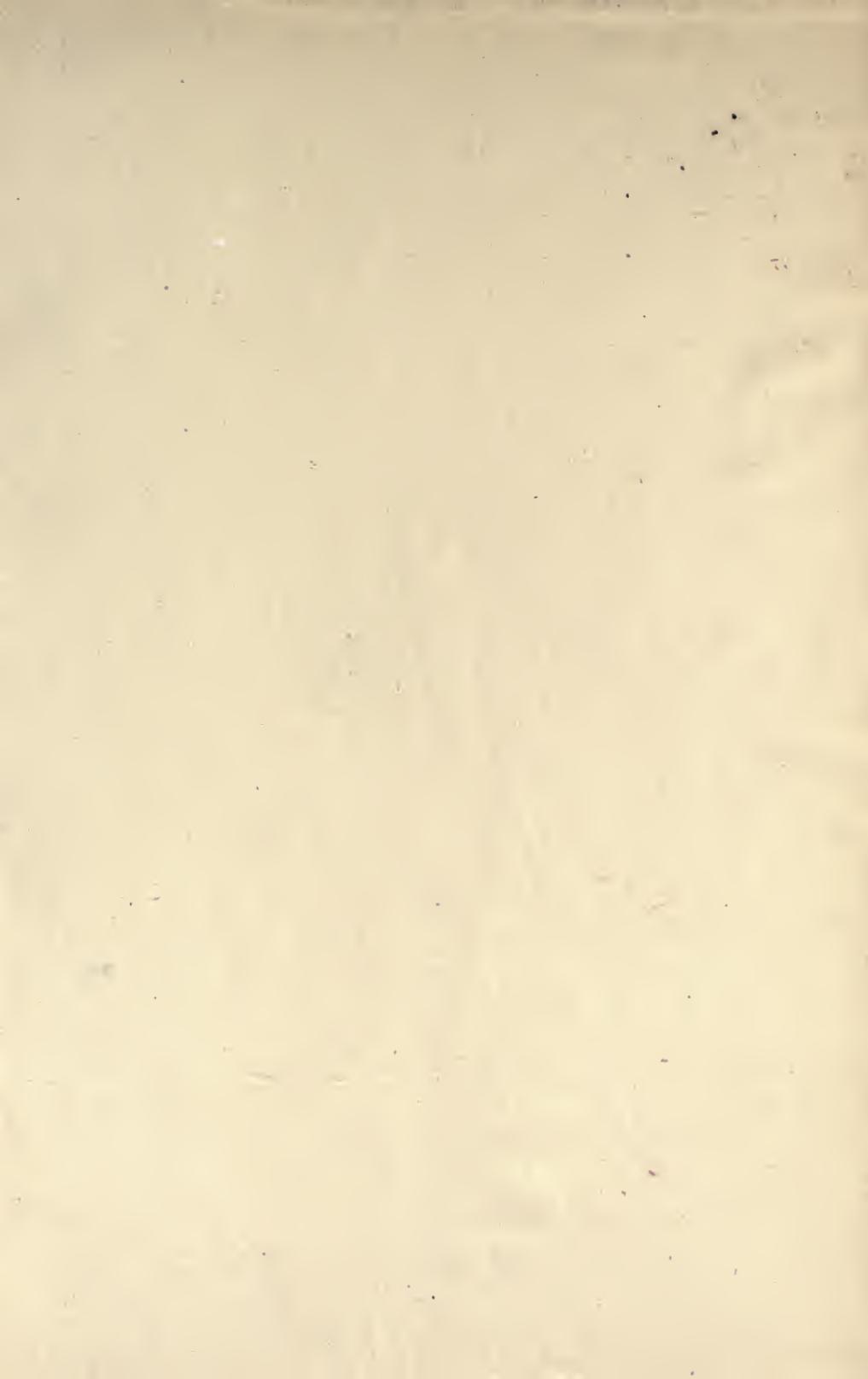
Yours truly,  
W. O. BENNETT











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